

No. 38

# Jersey Beat

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# AMERICAN STANDARD



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# JERSEY BEAT



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None of this is definite yet, but I've been kicking around the idea of retiring Jersey Beat after issue 40 and changing the name to something less regional - seems kind of silly to be publishing two fanzines (Grot is the other one, in case you didn't know) and we seem to be the last regional fanzine around anyways. It's getting harder every issue to limit the interviews and features to just local bands, and besides, it's time for a change; 40 is middle aged. If we do make a change, we'll need a new name, so I'm taking suggestions - winner gets a lifetime subscription to whatever we wind up publishing and of course instant fame & glory - and I'd also like some feedback on the whole idea. Just because we don't have a Letters To The Editor column doesn't mean you can't write me. If you do write, we can have a Letters column. Anyway, all the names I like have already been taken - Dead Beat, Orgasm Addict, Way Cool - so try to come up with something clever.

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*Special thanks to some way cool people:*

Janet Billig, Randy Haecker,

Jim Clevo, John Kass,

Mike Potential and Dave

Best.

*This special Drummer's Issue dedicated to Tommy Ramone and Topper Headon, two of the best, and to Fred Argenziano (get well soon, pal!)*

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# From The Editor's Desk

Welcome to the 38th episode of NJ's longest-running soap opera, Jersey Beat...or as I like to think of it, One Life To Waste. This is our biggest issue ever - 48 pages - and our second on newsprint. You'll notice a ton of demo and singles reviews, which was partly by coincidence (a ton of demos and singles came in the mail since last time) and partly on purpose. I'm getting a little sick about all this talk about a Punk Rock Recesssion, and how there aren't any good new bands around. You have to go out and FIND them, but they're there; there are four bands mentioned herein - Mayfirst, Bah Gah Brothers, Big Nurse, and Nude Swirl - who are terrific. Check them out!

I was in a really foul mood for most of August, when this issue was largely written, so any particularly bitchy reviews should be taken with a grain of salt. Late changes: Mayfirst lied in their interview, three of them decided to go back to college at the last minute, so they won't be playing out much until vacationtime rolls around. Chuck Trece is out of Underdog, who are now playing out as a trio. Orifice completed a long (and mostly successful) cross-country tour since we interviewed them.

**Random Notes:** Jon Pareles' Sept. 10 piece in the Sunday New York Times on the growing bigotry in rock was long-overdue, although in typically wishy-washy Timesian fashion, Pareles failed to throttle the guilty and even found a few college-bound liberal nitwits who were willing to say that Axel Rose's comments about niggers and fags, and the virulent anti-semitism of Public Enemy's Prof. Griff, were ok in that they signalled "a new openness about bigotry." So now it's ok to say you hate blacks, gays, or Jews, as long as you're sincere? Allow me to put my two cents in: No way. Guns 'N Roses and Public Enemy are ugly people with ugly messages. Don't buy their records, don't go to their concerts, and mention as often as possible what assholes they are, or go read another fanzine, ok?

I think it's kind of funny that Caroline Records was running around signing Youth of Today and Warzone just a year ago, and now they're mailing out promos of the new Bad Brains lp with official Bad Brains Bambu rolling papers.

The Blisters, The Fiendz, and Nude Swirl should all be releasing albums this winter, and I happen to like all those bands a lot. Some dormant fanzines promise to produce new issues too, including Jeff Fox' Maximum Rock N Raoul & Jim DeRogatis' Reasons For Living. This fall should also see the special Lester Bangs issue of Throat Culture, with some unreleased Lester tracks on a flexi-disc and some unpublished writings as well, plus articles about Lester by some heavy hitters who knew him when.

Alex Kogan from Rabid Fanzine wants me to assure everyone that she really is a girl, and having now met her, I can attest to this. By the way, she pronounces it Ray-bid.

I have no idea what will be in the next Jersey Beat, but I promise not to devote Diary Of A Rock Critic to the 1989 CMJ convention, ok? The last 3 issues featured my adventures at NMS, SXSW, and CMJ, so I think we can cool it on the music business convention coverage for a while.

Kevin Seconds and I met up at City Gardens and he was pleased as punch about the interview we did appearing in Maximum Rock N Roll. Then he has his business manager write a letter to MRR saying he was misquoted. Which makes me think maybe I don't want to believe in 7 Seconds anymore.

I keep waiting for someone to explain the Lunachicks to me. So far, I don't get it. And by the way, whatever happened to Scum Rock?

If you like this thing we're doing with drummers this issue and want to see something similar on bassists or keyboards or tuba players, let me know please. One of my pen pals wrote me that he was seeing the Rolling Stones in St. Louis and I mentioned that I had seen them at Madison Square Garden the year he was born. Which is one reason you didn't see me standing on line to buy tickets this year. In fact, the last band I would have paid to see play Shea Stadium was The Beatles.

The last band I saw in a football stadium, by the way, was Elton John. In 1976, I think.

- Jim Testa  
Sept. 1989

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Bryan Willette's the kind of guy about whom girls will often say, "he thinks with his dick." He's the focus, the emotional center, of the pounding noisestorm out of Philly called Orifice. "I was going to school about two years ago with a guy named John Bergen, and I was walking down the street one day thinking, 'God, I'm bored out of my skull, I haven't been in a band in two years and I'm really depressed, maybe I should do something about it,'" Willette recalls. "So I told my girlfriend, I'm gonna start a band with John Bergen, it's gonna be called Orifice, and it's gonna relate to life in the industrial age."

Orifice began as a tape project - "we'd tape drumbeats out at the 30th Street Station, pounding the shit out of the overpass with these lead pipes, and then running acoustic guitar over all those tracks," Willette says. "It turned out it wasn't really feasible to do that on stage because we didn't have the right kind of equipment to do the kind of sampling and tape looping that we wanted, so it just kinda grew into what we have now."

One day, Bergen brought along guitarist Frank Phobia of Anthrophobia to a rehearsal. Frank had played with drums (as opposed to actually playing drums) before and decided he liked being a drummer enough to stick around. Then he brought along another non-drummer friend, Don Glass, and Orifice had two drummers. "We started out with really simple rhythms and followed a drum machine every song," says Frank. "Since I learned how to keep a steady beat, though, we don't need the drum machine so much."

# ORIFICE

## A Pretty Nice Band...

## A Really Good Headache

In fact, for several recent gigs the drum machine stayed in its box ("it scares the shit out of sound men," says Brian), and is probably destined to leave the band permanently as Orifice's sound grows increasingly organic. "You could say we seem to be moving from the mechanical to the spiritual," says Brian. "There was this idea, when the band started, about working with machines. I was working in this shop listening to the presses and the folding machines and everything kind of set off this rhythm, it's just the same rhythm over and over again, and I thought it might be kind of interesting to try and do something with that in a band."

Orifice still creates a pounding roar, but the songs have grown less industrial and more along the lines of emotional noisecore bands. "People who can't remember our name call us the Philly band that sounds like Big Black a lot," notes Frank.



BRYAN WILLETT

Photo by Jim Testa

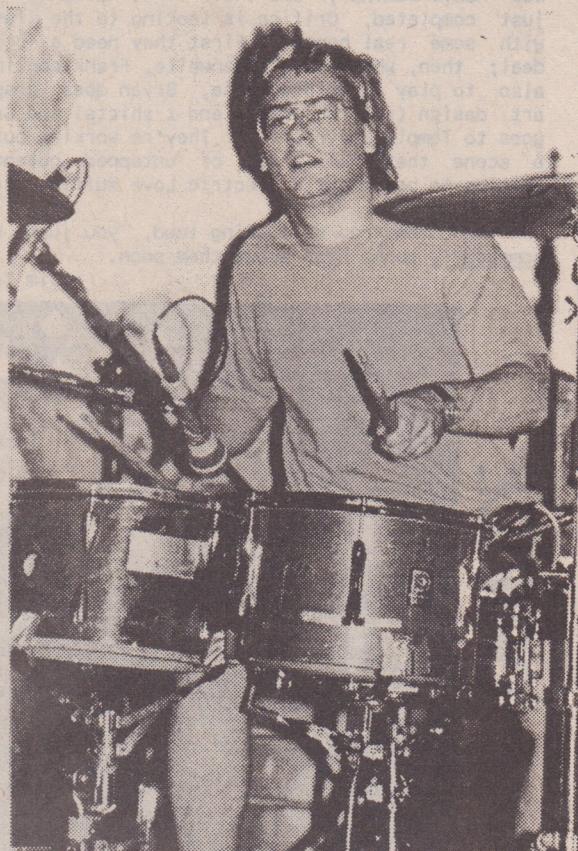


Photo by Jim Testa

FRANK PHOBIA

Continued on next page

Another reference point that recalls Big Black's Steve Albini is the mock/ironic edge to much of Bryan's vocals, and his lyrical obsession with certain themes. "Yeah, all the really sick songs about sex and death are by Bryan," says Frank. "We're trying to write some new songs about other things." Willette revels in sex, perversion, violence, and lust - not in real life, mind you, just his stage persona. Or so he says.

"Actually, I get that line a lot, people saying that I really am the guy up on stage, that it's not an act. But I'm just reacting to what's around me, people I know, things I've seen. All those songs come from my life," says Bryan. Of course, one of the band's best songs is called "A Pretty Nice Guy, A Really Good Liar."

Bergen eventually left the band and the current lineup has Willette on guitar and vocals, Phobia and Glass on drums and percussion, Grant Acker on guitar, and Pete Danz on bass. Besides the two drum kits, Orifice has a collection of metal drums, steel I-beams, and assorted trash metal which they use for extra percussion. The guitar and bass create a firestorm of sonic distortion, pierced by Bryan's screaming vocals, and the relentless pounding of the two percussionists...it's heady, powerful stuff, packing much more of an emotional punch than "pure" industrial/noise bands.

"Unfortunately, we lose a lot of gigs because people think that's all we are, some sort of industrial noise band, and we wouldn't be compatible with the kind of bands they book in their clubs," says Pete Danz, the bandmember with the longest hair and sharpest onstage moves.

With two demo tapes out, a cut on the "Taste of Philly" compilation distributed at this year's New Music Seminar, and their first national tour just completed, Orifice is looking to the future with some real hopes. First they need a record deal; then, who knows? Meanwhile, Frank continues also to play in Anthropobia, Bryan does graphic art design (record jackets and t-shirts) and Grant goes to Temple University. They're working out of a scene that has a lot of untapped potential waiting to break out - Electric Love Muffin, Scram, More Fiends...

And they're so fucking loud, you just know somebody's gonna hear about them soon.

- Jim Testa



Photo by Jim Testa

ORIFICE



Each summer, it just seems to get worse... the heat & humidity, the traffic, the pollution everywhere, and the ever-increasing number of posers/sheep too caught up in their own pursuit of money and leisure to take notice of what's really happening on this dead end planet. It gets so draining trying to survive, trying to find some hope. Everyone loves to complain. That never ends. The cycle of laziness/occasional inspiration/survival just continues. Now it's my turn to complain, as well as magnify some small pools of hope.

I just turned 35 this year, perhaps this is too old to write for a mostly rock-oriented zine? It doesn't matter, since some of us never really grow up, and it just gives me a better sense of history than most of the people who attend the gigs I do. Although I grew up during the 60's and loved a great deal of the music - even believing in those hippie ideals of peace, love, long hair, protest awareness - whatever magic there was then is long dead & gone. The further we get from then time-wise, the less likely it seems that those dreams will ever be a reality again.

So, oddly enough, I still attend those concerts by most of them aging 60's dinosaurs, more to see if those old geezers can still pull it off, mostly not for nostalgia. Thinking back, not one of these bands/leaders has been a disappointment. All of them pulled off hot & inspired sets - Jefferson Airplane, Fairport Convention, Neil Young (both solo w/ 4 new amazing political tunes, and with bands), the Who, War, Bob Dylan (mostly smokin' sets), the Dead (even in the rain Jerry's voice is quickly improving again), Iron Butterfly (who I used to despise), the Turtles (lots of laughs), the Byrds (with Gene Clark the only original member), the Monkees (I am not kidding), and Blue Cheer (2/3 of the original & totally wailing). Comin' up, I look forward to gigs by the Stones (always great live), the Kinks, and for the first time this century in New York City - Hawkwind!

## ON THE EDGE

I still check out loads of contemporary rock gigs, don't get me wrong. Here's a partial list of bands I've seen and been blown away by in recent months: Butthole Surfers, the Feelies (as always), Tiny Lights (ditto), Pere Ubu (!!), Mudhoney, Sonic Youth, Rhys Chatham, Camper Van Chadbourn, Naked Raygun (altho the crowd violence at Maxwells got out of hand due to a few stubble-headed dorks), Treacherous Jaywalkers, False Prophets (totally convincing and diverse), My Bloody Valentine, and Screaming Trees. And the two best singer/songwriters of the year remain Peter Blevgad and T-Bone Burnett. Even Owen Plotkin has a new song, "Suburban Resurrection." It should set the world ablaze!

Occasionally, both new and old acquaintances slip me cassettes of things they are working on. Currently I have a half dozen such tapes, and all are interesting; so here are some relatively short reviews of what I would recommend to you, the enlightened listener:

You might recall a tape I reviewed last summer by the Electric Peace Orchestra - smokin' psychedelic jams by Dissipation-offshooters Pop, Face & friends. Most of the lead guitar on these sessions was by Matt Hattrick. Matt's now in a band called The Blips, a burning garage power trio from NYC/Hoboken terrain. They have a full-length 9-song cassette out, and I believe they play locally. I haven't heard this great a garage-rockin' release in quite a while (yo, Skyclad!). Matt continually dazzles, blasting off with gripping, sustained-toned coolness, often frantic yet controlled. This trio is solid with humming bass, as well as mostly mature lyrics and Jim Morrison-like vocals all provided by Adam Quest. (164 Mulberry St., NYC 10013)

As a critic, I often hear bands that are technically proficient but play in a style I can't get next to. Love & Death are one such Elizabeth-area unit, featuring the vocals, keyboards, and songwriting of Frank McGlynn, formerly of Black Car, the band and studio (where I ran a couple of festivals last year.)



with  
bruce  
gallan  
ter

His current quintet just released a thematic 8-song cassette called "Classical Dirge." It's well done but certainly not my cup of tea. Sorta reminds me of the cosmic shmaltz done by Queen, early Genesis, even some Billy Joel-like sentimental pap. The overall feeling is one of heartfelt sadness. (153 Westfield Ave., Elizabeth, NJ 07208).

Richard Graham, known to all as "Bear," was one of the few constants in the ever-changing and oft-limbo-stated Lunar Bear Ensemble lineup, one of New Brunswick's oldest, finest, and most magical units, which Bear led with co-frontperson John Richey. When Lunar Bear went into limbo once again last year, their unreleased gem of an lp still afloat, Bear himself became tired of the local scene and split south for a year or so. His old percussion duo, Dos Equis, delighted audiences at two of my improv festivals. He's back in the area again, although not really part of any scene, and is itching to play his percussive magic once more. In the meantime, he has put together an amazing solo tape entitled "Lexicon." It's truly the best of numerous worlds. Bear has long studied percussion around the world and has mastered a unique balance on many instruments. Each of ten pieces on his tape are an exotic journey of textures, beats, communication, effective poetry, and warm, wordless vocalizing. Each piece is short, yet continually engrossing, at points stark & delicate, sometimes dense with layers of percussive magic. I hope to get him a slot in an upcoming Knitting Factory percussion festival, so stay tuned.

### BAH GAH BROTHERS

You have to use your imagination if you want to follow this band's exploits - everytime they get a club gig, their name gets spelled a new way in the ad. For the record, it's Bah Gah Brothers, which, appropriately, doesn't mean anything. They're not brothers and as far as I know, they're not Bah Gahs either. What I do know is that lead singer/guitarist Krugie used to front that swingin' teen trio from Princeton (later, Providence), The Disturbed, a band I liked so much I stuck 'em on three of the Jersey Beat Compilation tapes. When his bandmates split for college, Krugie recruited two new guys - Dave Ares on bass and Sanjay Khanna on drums - and the Bah Gahs were born. It's almost impossible to describe their sound - people say early Replacements, but that's mostly 'cos they're sloppy and full of punky energy. The tunes are full of emotion, slashing riffs, thumping bass, crashing drums, and often powerful lyrics. As with The Disturbed, Krugie kinda sings around the melody rather than right on top of it, but hey, Barry Manilow sings in key. What does that prove? These guys are gobs of goofy hi-energy fun. Check 'em out.

- Jim Testa

## BAH GAH BROTHERS

Photo by Jim Testa



## NEW BANDS



Photo by Jim Testa

## MAYFIRST

### MAYFIRST

Mayfirst's first demo emphasized Amy Jacobs' ethereal vocals, prompting numerous Throwing Muses comparisons. But that's changing. Says bassist Jesse Seven, "One of our gripes with most 'pop' music is that it's so obvious. Like a George Michael album...all you hear are the vocals. It's like the music doesn't matter. One of the things we're trying to do is equal things out and make everyone in the band equally important." On their second demo, the vocals almost disappear in the mix, which emphasizes Alex Saville's strong slash 'n burn feedback guitar excursions, Jesse's lead bass lines, and Drew Gardner's propulsive drumming. Some of the new songs embark on long psychedelic journeys with wild jazz-like interludes amid the ferocious guitar distortion and rapidfire percussion. With their strong and original sound, love of improvisation and experimentation, and a real sense of togetherness (3/4 of the band went to high school together, and Drew says, "We're really like a little family"), Mayfirst hopes to conquer their hometown of New Brunswick first, and then take on the Manhattan. And they might just do it. There's already been a nibble from a European label. Today, Brunfuss; tomorrow, the world?

- Jim T.



## *The Secret Lives of Drummers*



Drummers. They never get interviewed, never get their picture in fanzines (unless it's part of a head and half an arm flying around behind a cymbal), and rarely get songwriting credit. Yet most good bands start with good drummers. Drummers are still disassembling their kits and packing up when the other guys in the band have long since left the stage and started drinking beer and scamming on the babes. Drummers have to lug around ten times more equipment than anybody else, and buy drumsticks all the time, and snareheads. And they have to sit on their awfully uncomfortable little stools. They work harder, sweat more, and get fewer rewards than anybody else in rock 'n roll. So we thought it was about time we doffed our caps and gave them a place to - you should excuse the expression - bang their own drum a little. We asked a bunch of our favorite drummers from different bands the same questions, dealing with their choice of instrument, their role in bands, and their musical influences. Here are the answers. Hunker down, hold your ears, and dig in.

- Jim Testa

## Eric Spicer

Age: As old as the hills  
Band: Naked Raygun

Why'd you pick the drums when you chose an instrument to play?

I'm not sure, really...my mom said when I was very young, I used to go around the house and pound on everything so she got me a snare drum and stand when I was 5 years old, and I took right to it.

Describe your drum kit in loving detail.

My poor old drums...I have an old Tama kit...Super Star line...coated with sweat, beer & blood; 24" bass, 15 & 16" racks, 22" floortom (impossible to tune). I love 18 or 19" Zildjian crash cymbals...I have 3, one is cracked...I have the most beautiful 24" ride cymbal that I've had for around 4 years now...it has a that great darker sound that only comes from time & play.

Do you write your own drum parts? Do you think drummers should get songwriting credit?

99% of the time I write my own drum parts, but I'm always open to suggestions. Ok, generally they suck...but every once in a while one of the other guys will come up with something that is cool & I'll build on that. As far as credits go, I don't really mind not appearing...after all, anyone with half an ass and one eye will figure out who's drumming and where the ideas are coming from, so why whine?

Name your favorite drum solo...biggest influence. Actually, I HATE drum solos. I always think of that fat dead guy from Led Zeppelin floundering around without sticks during "Moby Dick"...Mayer from the Buzzcocks is my biggest influence, right behind him would be the original drummers for Killing Joke and Gang Of Four, and Capt. Sensible.

How did you learn to play drums - lessons, self-taught, or watching other drummers?

All, actually. I started taking lessons very young, maybe too young. I can play by ear no problem but my favorite thing to do is see or hear another drummer and hear a fill or beat I like and think, "I can use that!" After all, good artists borrow...great artists steal outright.

## JIM DeROGATIS

Bands: Airlines, Speed The Plough, Ex-Lion Tamers, Love Pushers, and too many others to mention...

I began pounding the drums in bands ten years ago as a freshman in high school after hearing the first album by the Clash. I thought it was a way to impress girls. I was kind of dumb then. I'm 24 now and I still haven't learned "how to play" the drums. I currently abuse a 4-piece Yamaha Recording Custom rosewood drum set, which I love more than life itself. I do not understand why anyone needs to play more than four drums, and I was tempted by the argument that you should use fewer. I am proudest of "Everyday Needs" on the Speed The Plough album and "Test," the first single by Airlines, which will be released by Susstone this summer.

Here is everything else that needs to be said about rock 'n roll drums: 1. Drums solos suck. 2. Charlie Watts. 3. John Bonham. 4. Drums solos suck.

BOB BERT  
Age: Old enough to be your mother, young enough to know how dumb these questions are.  
Bands: Pussy Galore, Bewitched, Sonic Youth

When all the other kids were learning guitar, how did you pick the drums?  
I wanted to totally annoy my family.

Describe your kit in loving detail:

Drums - Tama  
Cymbals - The Big Z  
Gas tank - junkyard  
Snare - Shell with 3 plates of metal with cock ring donated by Steve Albini (he swears he couldn't get it off but I don't believe it)

Do you write your own drum parts or are they suggested to you? Do you think drummers should get songwriting credit?  
I write a lot of my own drum parts with an open mind for suggestions. Drummers should always try to get songwriting credit or they will never see a cent of publishing bucks.

Name the greatest drum solo you ever heard. What drummers would you sell your soul to play like?  
Live drum solos - Sheila E., B.J. Wilson (Procol Harum)  
Favorite drummers: Mo Tucker, Ikue Mori, Gina Shock, Georgia Hubley, Sally (Honeymoon Killers).

All male drummers suck except Scott Ashton, Colm (My Bloody Valentine), Rick Brown, Rey Washam, Ringo, Clem Burke, and King Coffee.

I'd sell my soul to play like Richard Edson, Olatunni, Roland (Big Black), Yanna Trance.

Name the greatest drum solo in the history of recorded music. On what song would you have wanted to play the drum part?  
Greatest drum solo-the one where the Motley Crue guy is upside down, what a dickhead!  
"White Christmas" by Bing Crosby (hey, I need the royalties!)



Jim DeRogatis  
Airlines, Speed The Plough

## JACK RABID

Age: forgot

Bands: Springhouse (formerly Leaving Trains and Even Worse)

When all the other kids were learning guitar, why'd you pick the drums?  
Always wanted to play. Used to take the pots out of the kitchen cabinet and play on them with utensils until my mom found me and spanked me for my trouble. The guy behind us, Glen Reiger, had a set. I saw him play along with the new Beatles lp when I was 4. That did it! When I was 5 I got to borrow my Uncle Arnie's drums in Colorado, since he was in Vietnam. I was so happy I gave a "concert" for my family which in retrospect must have been an awful punishment.

Describe your kit in loving detail:

Just bought it used last year: A Tama Imperial Star, greyish white, medium-sized. Bought the cymbals (Paiste and Zildjian) and Tama stands separately. I don't really love it like I perhaps should. I don't talk "shop" with other drummers. I guess I have a bad attitude, I just play them and I don't think about them as being special or anything. Maybe I should.

Do you write your own drum parts? Do you think drummers deserve songwriting credit if they write their own parts?

Yes, I write them all. I'll also take suggestions from our bass player, Larry H. (and my old bassist Tim Sommer) if they suggest a different beat, cause I respect(ed) their opinion. Many musicians think it doesn't matter who plays the drums, but the sound of both the band and the songs differs drastically when you change drummers; whereas one guitarist can easily copy another, all drummers sound completely different even when they're trying to copy one another. Drum beats are perhaps more "arrangements" than songwriting but in democratic bands, everyone who contributes ideas (as opposed to taking orders) deserves to be cited for their contributions.

Favorite drum solo? Influences? Favorite drummers?

I don't like drum solos, but those short, intense ones Earl Hudson from Bad Brains used to do in "Rock For Light" and "Coptic Times" used to blow my mind. Influences: Charlie Watts, Keith Moon, Ringo Starr, Mick Avory, Rat Scabies, Dave Ruffy (Ruts), John Maher (Buzzcocks), Clem Burke (Blondie), Pete DeFreites (Bunnymen), Chuck Biscuits (DOA), Greg Hill (For Against). I'd make pacts with all sorts of demons if I could be as good as as Dave Ruffy, the greatest drummer I've ever seen.

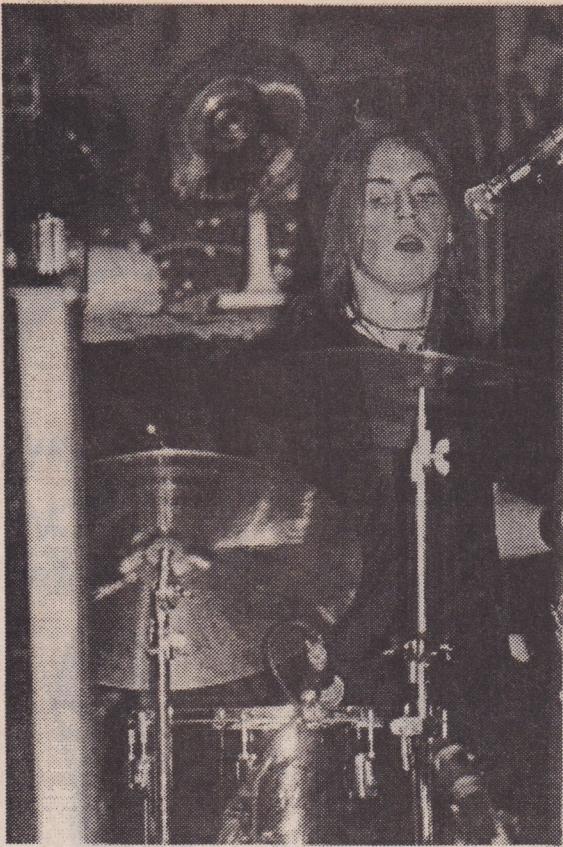
Name the greatest drum part in the history of recorded music.

Maybe Ringo's at the end of Abbey Road, cause it's so damn simple and catchy and has a sense of humor instead of being ego on parade. Maybe some Hendrix stuff. I would have loved to have played the drum part on "West One" by the Ruts - Incredible!



Jack Rabid  
Springhouse

Eric Spicer  
Naked Raygun



*Joe Darone  
The Fiendz*

JOEY DARONE

Age: 17

Band: The Fiendz

Why did you pick the drums when all the other kids were learning guitar?

Actually I WAS the other kid, trying to play guitar, bass, etc. It took a while of switching to figure out that I wanted to play drums.

Describe your kit in loving detail:

A black 5-piece TAMA with Zildjian cymbals and Tama hardware. Every drum is complete with ebony series drum heads. I'm not quite sure where I got my drum pedal but it's quite comfortable.

Do you write your own parts or are they suggested to you? Do you think drummers deserve songwriting credits if they create their own parts? Basically, I don't "write" drum parts. I just play what fits and remember that beat for the next time. I don't think anyone should get credit for songwriting unless what they contribute changes the song, and mostly drums don't.

Favorite drummer: Bill Stevenson, ALL

Do you play other instruments or write songs?

I write a lot of songs and once in a while we'll use something in the band. I can play the guitar but I certainly don't consider myself a guitarist.

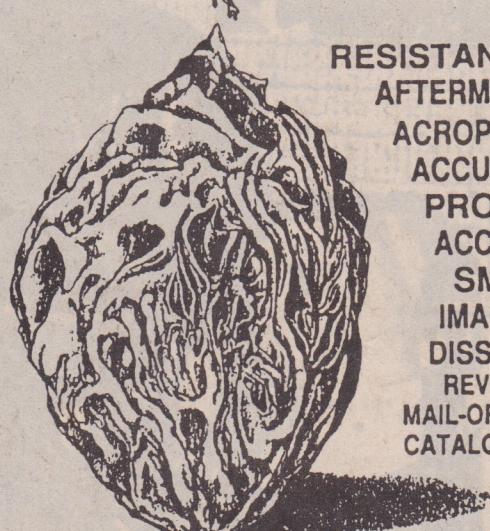
How did you start - lessons, self-taught, watching other drummers?

To me, any musician has what it takes to be a musician before they even start. It's just in my blood. I was tapping on the desks in school long before I ever considered buying a drumset. It just has to be something that exists as a part of you, and you have to develop it. Not everyone can be an artist, because they aren't born artists. Dig?



**THE PIT**

No. 4  
Summer 1989



RESISTANCE  
AFTERMATH  
ACROPHET  
ACCUSED  
PRONG  
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REVIEWS  
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**pit;(pit) n.** 1. an indentation or depression in the earth 2. a deep hole e.g. *pit of hell* 3. the large seed of a family of fruit such as peaches, avocados *et al.* 4. a repair/service area or audience section at motoring races and events e.g. *pit stop* 5. the catazine published by MOSH PIT RECORDS, always packed with interviews, photos, reviews, articles, and their famous no-holds-barred catalogue of underground hardcore, thrash and industrial music and magazines from around the globe.

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**Mosh Pit Records (Dept.JBS2 ) PO Box 9545 Colo. Spgs. CO 80932 USA**

Name: Ivan DePrume  
Age: 12  
Bands: White Zombie

When all the other kids were learning to play the guitar, why'd you pick the drums?

Because they're more MACHO, low profile...and no other instruments were the same.

Describe your drum kit in loving detail:  
Round, lighted, and if I step on them, my foot would touch the ground.

Do you write your own drum parts? Do you think drummers should get writing credit for song?

Rob writes everything.

Rob is Satan.

I look up to him as if he were my dad.

Name the best drum solo you ever heard:

Bill Bruford, Yes

Your biggest influence?

Will Shepler, Agnostic Front

What song would you sell your soul to have played the drum part on?  
"United Blood," Agnostic Front

How did you learn to play the drums?  
Rob taught me.

Ivan DePrume  
White Zombie

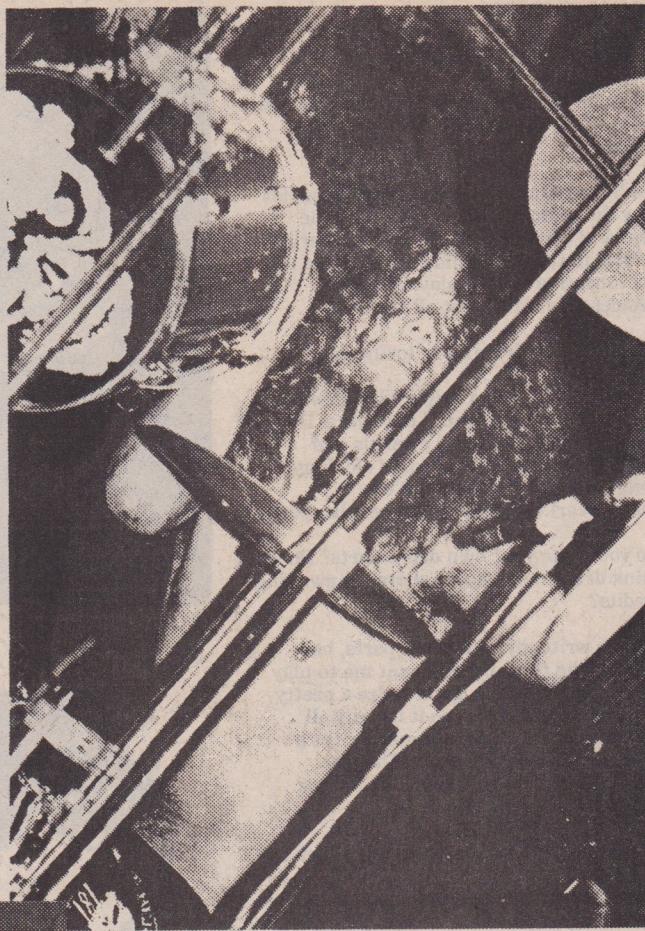


Photo by Michele (Little Mo)

DEAN JOSEPH

Age: 18  
Bands: Underdog, Good Humor

When all the other kids were learning guitar, why'd you pick the drums?

I always dreamed of having blistered hands and lame hearing.

Describe your kit in loving detail:

My drums are big and grey. There's a 24" kick drum on the floor with the other 2 guys sittin' on top. One more hangs off a cymbal stand. On my right is a big grey floor tom and in front of me is my killer brass snare drum. My cymbals are by 3 different companies and are changing constantly because I can't find any that don't break. Oh yeah, my drums are Tama but I can't wait to get Pearl's.

Do you write your own drum parts?

I write most of my drum parts but on occasion, certain other band members (no names) do an incredibly bogus job of trying to show me their ideas of what beat they want me to play on their songs. I always listen carefully, laugh hard, and usually play whatever I was playing in the first place.

Biggest influence?

I don't think I would sell my soul to play like anyone but I would pay \$5.00 to play like my main man, Chuck Teece. He's got the coolest drum style I've seen yet and can tear a beat up like no one else. Chuck is my biggest influence and I wanna be just like him (without that bristly thing on top of his head.)



Dean Joseph  
Underdog

Photo by Ken Salerno

**BRIAN VERMIN**

Age: 12

Band: Screeching Weasel

When all the other kids were learning the guitar or trumpet, why'd you pick the drums?

With the guitar or trumpet (only weenies play the trumpet) you'd always be the center of attention. But the drummer gets to hide in the back. And crowds make me nervous; therefore, I play drums. Besides, drummers get all the chicks.

Describe your drumkit in loving detail:

It's a 27-piece Tama Imperial Star with heavy duty double-braced hardware, DW 500 pedals, Zildjian Z Series cymbals and gong, with Charlie The Cow's old ding-dong bell...but in real life, it's a cheap Pearl import that sounds like poop.

Do you write your own drum parts? Do you think drummers should share songwriting credits?

I try to write my own drum parts, but most of the time, others want me to play very basic. But then again we're a pretty basic band, musically, so it usually all falls into place. If a drummer writes a song, he should get credit. If he just plays along, he would quit his bitching that he doesn't get credit. Oi!

Name the greatest drum solo you ever saw.

I saw this old man about 65 yrs old in a suit on Johnny Carson fuckin' jam without even a beat of sweat on his body. I can't even play in my undies for 5 minutes without sweating like a pig with blue balls.

Do you play any other instruments or write songs?

I try to play guitar but I suck & I should give it up. I write songs in my head but I can't explain how they go to anyone else so I suppose I should give that up too.

How did you learn how to play?

I taught myself, and I also rip off other drummers' styles. I watch a lot of drummers and always try to rip them off.



*Brian Vermin  
Screeching Weasel*

**CHRIS EMERSON**

Age: 19

Band: Necropolis, 210

When all the other kids were learning to play the guitar or trumpet, why'd you pick the drums?

I didn't start playing until I was 15, which was when I got heavily involved in underground stuff. I always liked the drums because I didn't like blowing in a hole or plucking anything or pressing a key. I just keep time by beating defenseless drums.

Describe your drum kit in loving detail:

5 piece Tama Superstar, my first and only kit I ever plan to own, 'cause they're so expensive. They look nice and sound good enough for me and the soundman.

Do you write your own drum parts? Do you think drummers should get songwriting credit?

I write 95% of the parts by myself. I make things up as we are putting a song together. As far as credits go, drummers don't need them. When I listen to a new album, I assume the drummer is doing his own thing, which is true most of the time. A band works together, each member doing the best they can creatively. Do guitarists get credit for writing their individual solos?

Name the greatest drum solo you ever saw.

Dennis Chambers played the hottest solo I've ever seen, and he plays for John Scofield, an established jazz guitarist with a band. My influences really helped me when I first started playing. Reed Mullins from C.O.C. influenced the hell outta me on their "Animosity" album.



*Chris Emerson  
Necropolis*

JAMES D. "WINK" McDougall

Age: 22

Bands: Dog Tired, Spinal Biffida

Why'd you pick the drums when all the other kids were learning to play the guitar? Actually, drums weren't the first. I played violin and trombone...drums came into play, excuse the pun, at age 14 and I just stuck to things like timbales and shitty trapsets until I got serious. It's hard to practice when the whole block knows how bad you suck. But I'm sticking with it.

Describe your drumkit in loving detail.

It can't be described in "loving detail" because there's much more I'd like to add before trying intercourse with it. For now, I have a Ludwig 5-piece, all black and chrome. I play Remo heads and Zildjian cymbals in a group of 3 plus a high hat. My pedal is a chaindrive D.W. and I use Pro Mark 2B's for sticks. I plan on expanding what I have, not changing.

Do you write your own parts or have them suggested to you? Do you think drummers should get songwriting credit if they write their own parts? In the beginning, God brought together two guitar players, each with their own ideas. Then came rhythm! New spectrums were being reached among each other. But that was the beginning. Now since the band has grown comfortable with each other's ideas, this young drummer boy creates his own ideas into which he can hold up a solid background for what they call songs. In other words, 98% of what I play is my own creation. The funniest thing in the world to hear is a non-drummer describe what they want to hear in words like da-da or dum-da-dum!

It's up to your own self to decide whether or not to take credit for a song. Lyrics are one thing but getting duffed on music credits really sucks. If only a few are involved then it's not a band!

Play hard! - James

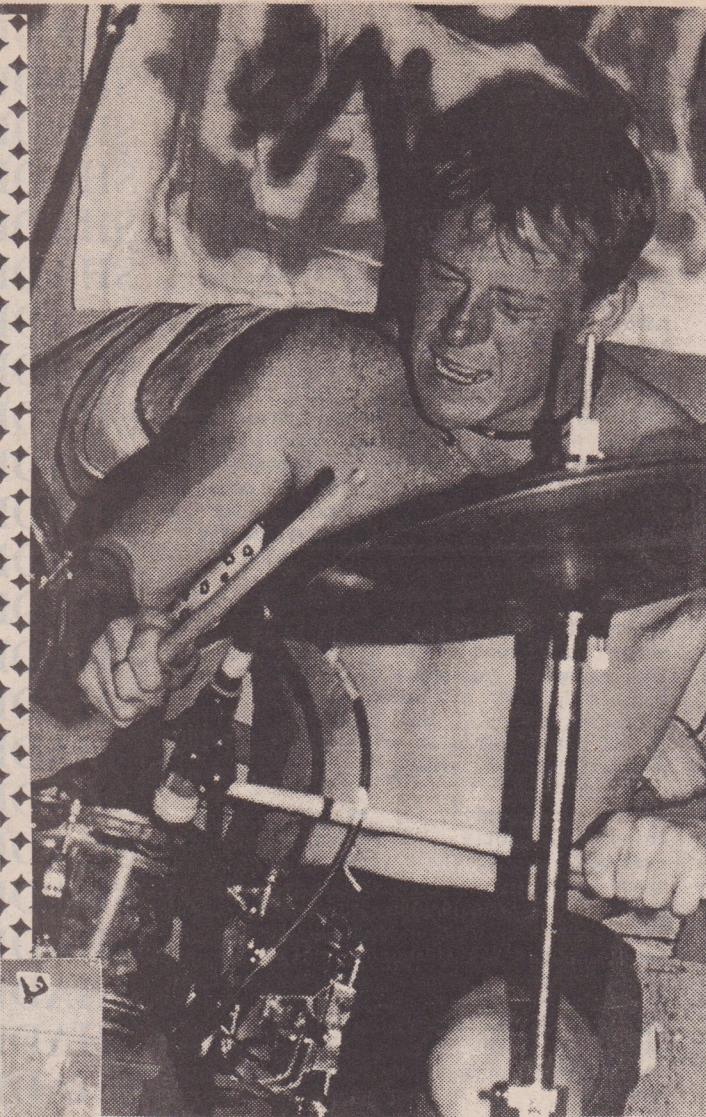


Photo by Jim Testa

**Jim 'Wink' McDougall**  
**Dog Tired**

**Bil Kleemeyer**  
**The Blisters**



BIL KLEEMEYER

Age: 23

Band: The Blisters, Amoeba

Describe your drumkit in loving detail: It's got great curves and a great rack. Its measurements are 14x15x18x28!

Do you write your own parts? Do you think you should get songwriting credits for them? I write them myself because no one else in the band has rhythm. I don't think I should get credit because keeping the beat has nothing to do with key, modulation, or changes. There's less memorization involved.

Name the greatest drum solo you ever heard. What drummer would you sell your soul to play like? Which drummer has been your biggest influence? Bill Stevenson  
Bill Stevenson, and  
Bill Stevenson of the Descendents.

Name the greatest drum solo you ever heard: Queen, "Keep Yourself Alive." Basic but sweet.

by Jim Testa

SHADES APART is a young popcore trio from Bridgewater, NJ, whose self-titled debut lp on Wishingwell Records just explodes with melody, energy, and harmony. Unfortunately, few people have heard the record, nobody knows where Bridgewater is, and when you come right down to it, hardly anyone has ever heard of Shades Apart, a situation we will hopefully begin to rectify here. The band is Mark Vecchiarelli on guitar and vocals, Kevin Lynch on bass and vocals, and Ed Brown on drums. Originally known as Subculture, the band was persuaded by Wishingwell's Pat Dubar to change their name in order to avoid being mistaken for another Subculture, so we started by asking how the new name came about and what it means.

Ed: Well, I supposed it's open to interpretation, but our initial idea meant "different kinds of perception." For example, you and I could look at a certain color of blue and see two different colors... The color is whatever it is but we perceive it in our own ways and establish our views.

Kevin: To simplify it, everybody sees things slightly differently than everybody else. Their views are just a shade apart.

The band hooked up with Wishingwell in September of 1987, but the album wasn't released until November of 1988 (and we didn't hear it until the summer of 1989!). Dubar has since dissolved Wishingwell to form a new label, Powerhouse Records, which leaves Shades Apart...



KEVIN

Photo by Jim Testa

A black and white photograph of a person's face, heavily shadowed and obscured, with a small amount of hair visible. The image is framed by a border of the word "SHADES" repeated vertically on the left and "APART" repeated horizontally at the bottom.



A black and white photograph of a young man singing into a microphone. He has dark hair and is wearing a light-colored shirt. The background is dark and out of focus. The word "SHADES" is repeated vertically on the left side of the image, and the word "APART" is repeated vertically on the right side.

# SHADES APART

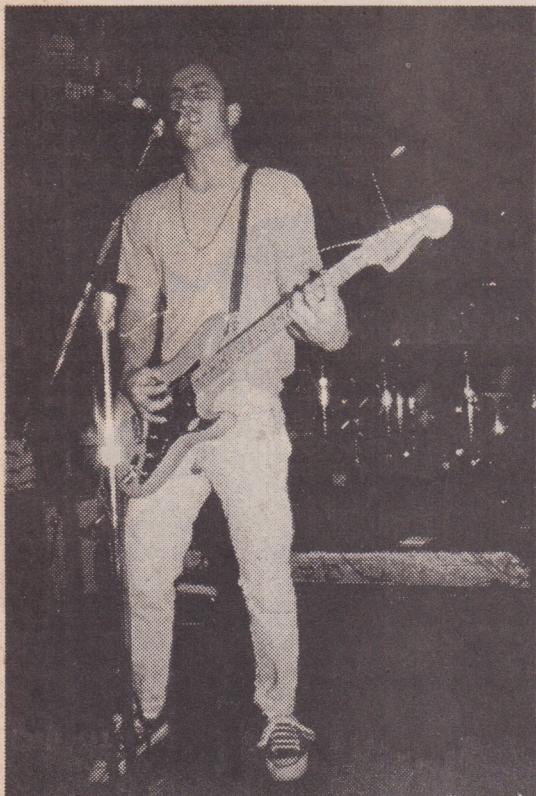
**Kev:** We don't plan to be involved any further with this company. Pat (Dubar) seems to be an ok guy and we won't slag him. Giant Records (which distributed Wishingwell) however is pretty beat to deal with and besides, Powerhouse hasn't shown any interest in us.

**Ed:** So far we haven't seen any money from the record, but we didn't really expect to. When the lp was released we were completely unknown, so we're not holding out breath for the big payoff.

# APART

# APART

# APART



**SHADES** **MARK**

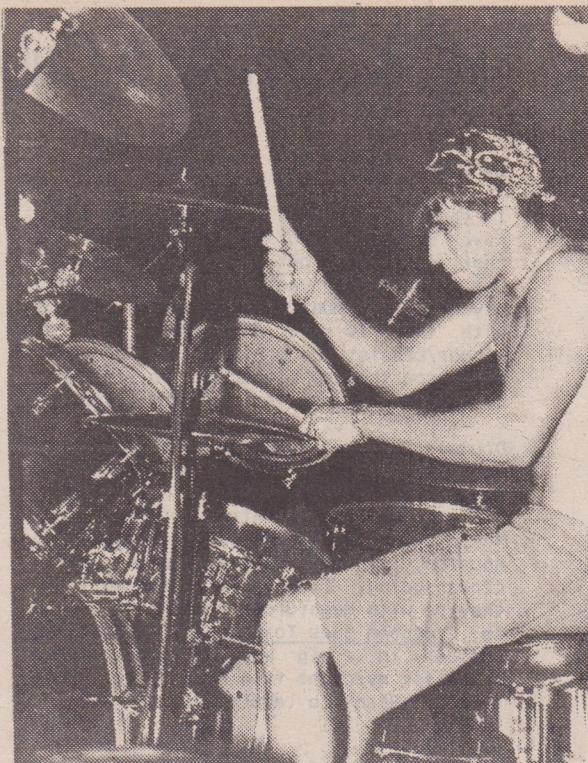


Photo by Ken Salerno

**ED**

Shades Apart's sound is a blend of melodic punk rock with strong vocal harmonies from Kevin and Mark, a far cry from the power-chord thrash of most NJ/NY HC bands. Is there any pressure to mosh more from local crowds, we asked?

**Kevin:** No, I don't think anyone pressures us to change out style. People who like our music seem content with the way we do it. We try to rely evenly on power and melody to bring out both, and so far people seem to like it ok.

And now for that old standard question... influences?

**Kevin:** The three of us have all been playing music since we were pre-teens (not together, of course). I think everything you learn leaves some effect, and our biggest influence is our solid musical backgrounds.

**Ed:** I trust people to know if they like (our music) or not, and why. As far as what to call it or whatever, that's not a big deal. We don't want to alienate anyone by labelling our music this or that, but whatever someone sees in it, that's what it is to him.

Shades Apart recently returned from their first real tour and are now settling in to re-establish themselves on the local scene and go about getting another record deal. As for their immediate plans...

**Kevin:** Our immediate plan is to play as many shows as possible and become established. In the long run, we'd like to find a different label more into promotion, but right now we're playing and writing new material. We're serious as a band and hope to find a label that's serious about us. Mark and Ed are taking some time off from school for a while in order to see what kind of potential we have. I graduated from college last spring which means my time is wide open to do the same.

You can write to Shades Apart about getting a copy of their lp (or signing them to your label) at 750 Red Lion Way, Bridgewater, NJ 08807.

# KINGS X: No Labels, Please

by Debbie Sager

In their hippie-like threads, they might have stepped out of the 60's - a decade that influenced not only their demeanor but also their adventurous, sometimes psychedelic, music...hard rock charged with the raw power and smokey soul of singer/bassist Doug Pinnick. The only 80's band they're comparable to, in terms of taking chances, is Janes Addiction.

Drummer and native South Jerseyan Jerry Gaskill, along with Pinnick and guitarist/sometimes vocalist Ty Tabor, did an unusual thing after forming Kings X in 1980. In 1985, they relocated to Houston, of all places, to get their career going. It paid off, though. Now they're with Megaforce, and their second lp, Gretchen Goes To Nebraska, is getting noticed in a big way. They've opened shows for everyone from Blue Oyster Cult to Robet Plant to labelmates...Anthrax.

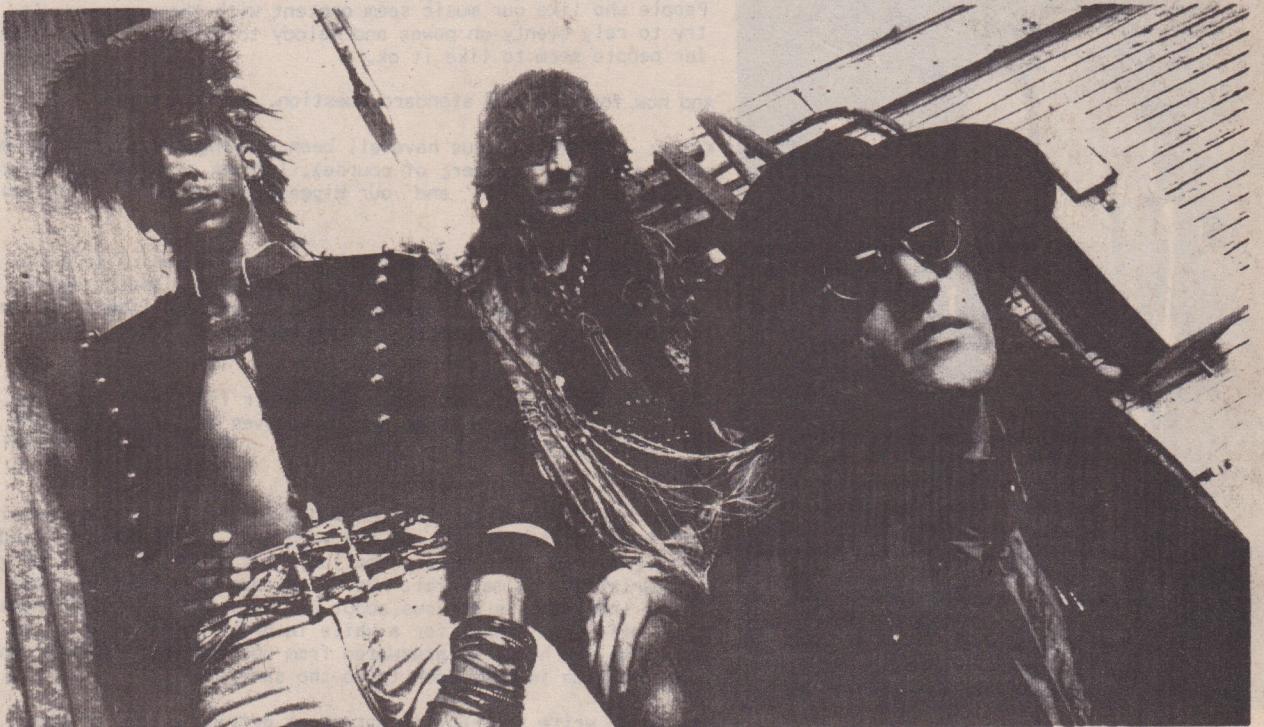
"We were kind of apprehensive, too when they told us we were gonna go out with Anthrax," recalls Jerry, a mellow-sounding, very cool sort of guy. But the gig went well. Surprisingly, their toughest experience came opening for BOC. "At first, that crowd was the most leery of us. But as soon as the show went on, they seemed to catch on and start thinking, 'Hey, yeah, this band's all right!'"

"Over My Head," "Summerland," "The Burning Down," and "Fall On Me" are standout tracks from their new lp (the whimsical title suggested partly by an associate, partly by a story Jerry wrote.) This material seems a little less accessible than than their debut. "I don't know. I don't usually think in terms of accessible or inaccessible, we just basically do the music that we enjoy doing," Jerry says (although he personally feels their latest effort is more accessible than the last one.)

Now close friends, the Kings-men "all met in a musical background. I met Doug when he was asked to join the same band I was asked to join. I met Ty through another band... Eventually, Doug heard Ty play and we said, 'Man, the three of us need to get together in one band.'

Kings X music isn't easy to categorize, and Jerry is glad of that, altho he admits record companies have a tough time marketing such an eclectic act. "Personally, I don't like labels at all. Labels always tend to limit you. We do play heavy music, but...I don't want to be limited to that. I appreciate anybody's honesty; whatever they feel or want to say about us, that's fine. But I don't want to categorize it."

Continued on next page



DOUG PINNICK

TY TABOR

JERRY GASKILL

# KING'S X

There's a mystic, spiritual tone in some songs that may lead people to regard them as a Christian band. "Some people ask us about that, but I don't put that label on us at all," Jerry says. "Although we may be Christians, we're not in any way what you would think of as a 'Christian Rock Band.'"

In the beginning, there was pressure for them to make safe, easily identifiable music. "We had many a year trying to push our music into the commercial, trying to do what we were told we were supposed to do, and then we met Sam. And he just made us realize that we needed to be honest. We needed to play the music was inside of us."

Sam is Sam Taylor - "our manager, our mentor, our friend," Jerry says. Formerly associated with ZZ Top, he directs Kings X's videos as well.

The group collaborates on all aspects of recording. "We could all be in the same room and start playing and throwing ideas at one another," Jerry says. The fans, for their part, seem to appreciate the effort Kings X puts into being different lyrically as well as musically. "We get letters from fans where a lot of them make definite comments about the lyrics and what they mean to them, so I think they take the whole package. They take Kings X for what it is."

He readily acknowledges being inspired by the 60's. And Doug "definitely brings that R&B influence with him. He'll be the first to admit that he's really into Sly. He loves Sly." The ghost of Jimi Hendrix seems to haunt their more cosmic material; though Jerry can't pinpoint it, he agrees, "I'm sure there may be an indirect Hendrix influence floating around that we've picked up on."

People like me who have never been south of the Mason-Dixon Line wonder what kind of reception an integrated band gets down South. "I think it's a bit more tame than it used to be," Jerry says. "They've been pretty accepting of us. We had people warn us about that, but we haven't encountered it ourselves. For the most part, I think that's a thing some people just carry inside them. I know that prejudice definitely happens all over the country, but I don't think it's as overt as it used to be."

There music certainly crosses many boundaries in its appeal. There's no such thing as a typical Kings X fan. "As we've gone around different places, it seems there's a wide range of fans - rock 'n roll people, punk people. Our moms like us, our dads have their favorite songs. There's thrash people who say they love us, and we could never have imagined that! I don't know what it is..." Even in L.A., Jerry says, "they've really taken to us."

At the time of this interview, just as more and more radio stations were playing the single, "Over My Head," Kings X were planning to tour the U.S., possibly with Masters of Reality. Jerry praises the Masters' music as "really good stuff...they have that 60's, early 70's sound."

He's especially eager to bring his music back to his old stomping grounds. "I look forward to the day we play New Jersey. I'd love to come back there and play. I'm from South Jersey and, y'know, North and South Jersey are almost two different states. There's a different mentality."

But the rock 'n roll spirit is the same, and Kings X should find a lot of fans in either place. Remember, Jon Bon Jovi, Skid Row, and Patti Smith all started out as "Southerners" too.



# KING'S X

by Tom Brebric

I knew this get-together was going to roll along nicely, as I met Ed (guitar) and noticed the skull in his fishtank. The Wretched Ones are a 5-piece from Northern Jersey who, though only together since November, 1988, have each seen duty in other area punk bands. (I promised not to divulge which since the band prefers to rely on their own music; however, they claim to have once been known as the band that could consume the largest quantities of beer in the Garden State.) This leads me to wonder:

Q: What's your favorite bar?

A: Anyone with cold beer on tap.

On a more serious note, this is a hard-working band that takes its music seriously. Lately, they've been quite busy, playing the local club circuit (Pipeline, Belmont Cafe, etc) and have appeared on Pat Duncan's show on WFMU FM. The band's music, though original, has its roots in classic punk. Current faves include the Lazy Cowgirls, D.D. King, the Hard Ons, and this comment: "We hate the Grateful Dead and everything that they stand for."

I got to see these guys rehearse in their studio, filled with former Bay City Roller PA's and where they recorded their 13-song demo (reviewed in Jersey Beat #37). The band has their material down tight and basically play with no posing or pretensions. I can't quite put it into words, but there's a sort of very likeable attitude about the band that comes across.

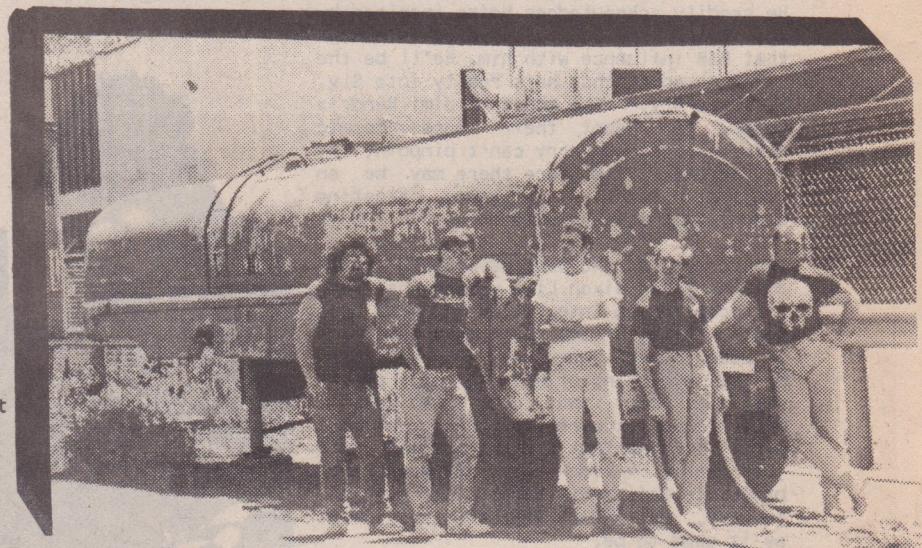
For instance, when asked about their ages, they said, "We're old as hell, we like the word experienced better, but old is honest." Well, if late 20's and early 30's are old...sigh.

After a brief discussion in which I learned that someone in Ricky Ricardo's Orchestra played a Strat and the ramifications and reasons why pigeons try to fly through plate glass, it was time for the band to play again:

XODMINI

"Troubled Within" - The Wretched Ones

I don't know what's going on  
all the good times are gone  
I just wanna run and hide  
I've got a problem inside  
I'm troubled within  
I don't even know my name  
Every day seems the same  
I just hang out in my room  
My world is full of gloom  
I'm troubled within and I can't help it  
I try to help but it's no use  
Take my medicine everyday  
but the pain won't go away  
I'm troubled within



Other gems include "Nice Guys Finish Last," "Going Down The Bar," and "Why Do You Lie." If original music with punk roots is what you're after, check these guys out next time they play near you. In the meantime, you can get a 13-song demo for \$4, and black band-logo t-shirts for \$8, and ask about their beer mugs too!

The Wretched Ones  
PO Box 1441  
Clifton, NJ 07015

## The Wretched Ones

## Punk On Tap

by Jim Testa

New York Hardcore may be in an awful rut, but now & then a band emerges that catches your ear with a fresh sound and a new energy. American Standard are like that, breaking just about all the rules of what a hardcore band is supposed to be these days.

Lead singer Bill Dolan is almost a decade older than most of the fans he sings for at all-ages shows. His brother Matt on guitar has a fiery mop of red hair that grows longer & wilder every time the band hits a stage. Bassist Scott Bilbrey and drummer J.Collangello have grown together into an awesome rhythm machine, driving the band's Descendents/7 Seconds influenced melodies with fluid grace, precision and power. The band has been very well received up & down the east coast; they even managed a national tour without releasing anything but a demo tape, recorded at D.C.'s fabled Inner Ear Studios. AS frequently turns up on bills with D.C. bands like Soulside and Swiz.

Bill has been trying to get this crew into Jersey Beat since May 4, 1988, when he sent me this note: "Hello, here's our demo, hope you like it." I did then, but not nearly as much as I like what the band has become. And now, finally, American Standard...

**Q:** Let's start with why you seem to know everybody who's anybody in D.C. and Boston. For a band that didn't even have any vinyl out until this summer, you've been very well connected to the whole East Coast hardcore community.

**Bill:** Well, I don't know everyone...It just started by talking to people. People, for some reason, think we're from D.C. I didn't know anyone in Boston until I met (Mike) Gitter, and he kind of introduced us around... And when we started doing Boston shows, that's how we got to know people in Boston. D.C., I guess we started doing shows with Swiz and Soulside. I don't even remember how it started, but we just started playing shows with them, and now we can't get rid of them.

## American Standard

*Living up to a higher standard.*



Q: Do you think it's easier being a band in D.C. right now? The audience there seems much more open to new music.

Bill: I think when it comes to creativity, in D.C. there's a lot more acceptance of new ideas and stretching the possibilities. Like, if Rites of Spring came out in NY, I don't think they'd play CBGB's matinees, I think they'd play CB's at night, and then they'd never develop that punk crowd. I think they're always trying to do things new there. It's not that one city's good and one's bad...but as far as creativity goes, I think in D.C. they just try to go for new things all the time. I was living down there in '85 for a time, and it just seemed to me to be a more college-oriented crowd than a New York crowd.

Q: In New York, the kids just seem to want to hear bands that mosh.

Bill: Yeah, it's weird, the kids are into different parts of songs too. In New York, the kids go nuts for the slow parts; in D.C., they go nuts for the fast parts. It's hard to explain...it just seems like a friendlier crowd (in D.C.).

Q: When you were in D.C. in '85, were you involved in the scene?

Bill: I wasn't involved. I went to a lot of shows, but I didn't really know anybody. I was in school. (Catholic University)

## Before You Plan Your Bathroom, Consider These 10 Questions.

Photo by Jim Testa



## American Standard

Q: So delving into the origins of the band, how did you start singing in a band with your brother?

Bill: I started a band called American Standard with my friend Paul, who had been in a band called Sand In The Face. They were big back in the early 80's. And this guy Matt Brown was in the band. We never played out but we wrote all these songs and played parties and people's basements. It was a sort of Clash kind of band. Then my brother and Jay, our drummer, in '87, started playing together, and Scott bought a bass and he started, and they had a couple of singers and then I started singing with them. And then they wanted to use the name American Standard. At first I didn't want to, we ended up using it. I kind of like the name. Sometimes I think it conjures up the wrong meanings. We picked it just cause we're average American kids, not punks or anything. Maybe we should have called ourselves Average Joe. On the one hand, I think people might think we're nationalist skinheads when they hear the name, on the other hand, since it's a toilet bowl company, people think we're like the Descendents and poo-poo humor, and we're neither. I don't know, we'll see what happens. Maybe we'll get sued when they find out about the record. I don't know, we've violated anybody's copyright, since American Standard is a bathroom fixtures company and they don't have anything to do with music.

Q: Unless you start releasing records on porcelain.

Bill: We are looking into it, tho. Like when you lift up the toilet seat, it plays "It Comes Around" or one of our other songs.

Q: So do you like being in a band with your kid brother?

Bill: I do. You know what's weird? I always thought I'd be in a band with my brother. When he was little, I swear to god, he used to play piano, guitar, violin, and I forget what else. All these different instruments... It's good in one way, because when you're with your brother, you can be brutally honest and nobody's feelings are gonna get hurt, 'cause he's your brother, right? We get along really well. There's a six year age difference but he's always hung around with older kids and I've always been extremely immature, so it works out well. My parents have been extremely supportive although they've never been to a show... 'cause my brother said, like, don't come to the shows.

Q: Do you ever watch Matt play guitar and just marvel at what he does?

Bill: All the time. Because I am the king of the fidgets. I bought this guitar and I said to myself, I am going to learn how to play the guitar, I am going to learn how to play the guitar... But I just don't have the patience. Matt hasn't been playing that long, but he just plays all the time, and I think he's a damn good guitar player. It just amazes me 'cause there's no way I could do that.

I think the whole band has really come along, just improved tremendously since we started. Scott and Jay, I'm really pleased with the way they play together, they've just come a long way. And my voice didn't really start to improve until I started singing with some friends of mine in a band called Flux for a while. That was just kind of a rock band but it definitely helped. But as far as talent, I think everyone else in the band is far superior than me. I just make up for it in goofy stage antics.

## American Standard

Q: Matt does a lot of really neat distortion things with that guitar without using any effects pedals.

Bill: Well, he'd like some. It's just due to financial considerations that he doesn't have any. I think he does really well with what he has. It's just when you see someone like Dr. Know, how much stuff he has, it'd be great to have that, but... Someday, someday.

I think Matt has his own guitar style. When we first started, we didn't have our own identity. There were these bands that we loved, like Bad Brains and Cro-Mags, and we were into the melodic thing like early 7 Seconds, and we didn't have our own sound. And I guess that just comes with time. None of us had been in bands before so there was no strong personality shining through. We kind of just evolved into our own kind of sound.

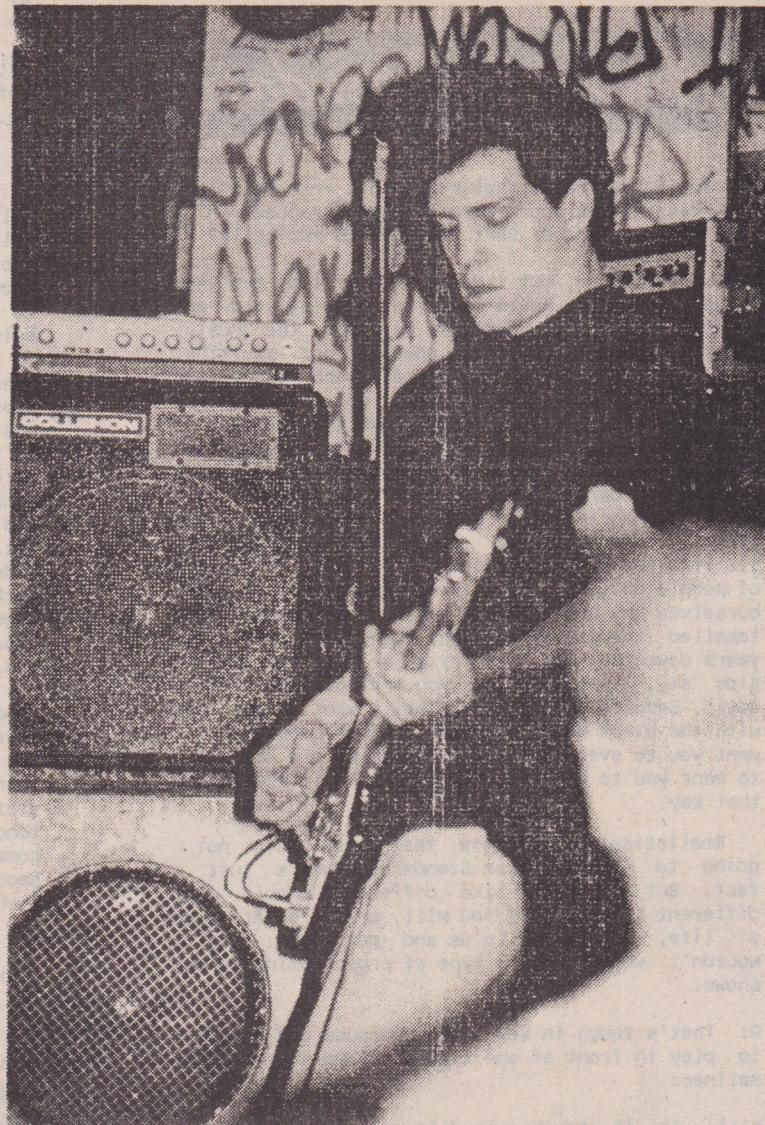


Photo by Jim Testa

Scott 'Soop' Bilbrey

Q: Ok, make believe you just saw American Standard for the first time, and you're telling your best friend about this great band you just discovered... How do you want that kid to describe you?

Bill: I'd say, with all the new songs and stuff, I'd just like it to be 'powerful, melodic, hardcore/rock.' Not thrash - what we try to do is have a melodic type of sound but still with plenty of power, not going wimpy. A band that I'd - not be like, but I enjoy their music in many ways - is Jane's Addiction. They're melodic but they also have that power that knocks you off your feet. And I think that's important.

We recently wrote this song, and it was really melodic, but it just wasn't us, and we shitcanned it. It's unfortunate because I thought it was a really good song, but, if I was a fan into American Standard and all of a sudden I saw them do this song, I'd say, What are these guys trying to pull off? I'd like to keep a 'Rock' kind of sound but also keep the power. A song doesn't have to be fast to be powerful.

# American Standard

Q: Do you see bands that really get into this idea of 'keeping hardcore pure' getting trapped in a very limited idea of what they can do musically?

Bill: Well, yeah, but I was guilty of that too when I was younger. Maybe I'm just growing old and tainted, but when you first get into the music, there's something really special and exciting. There was an integrity there, and there was something very personal. I really got into the fact that they were trying to break down the barriers of what you look like or what background you came from, they were trying to create this new thing with no boundaries. But then as time went on, all these boundaries were constructed, and it just seemed to me so futile. That's not why I got into it. It's really unfortunate. So I'd say, yes, a lot of people do limit themselves. We try not to label ourselves any one thing. Look how many bands have labelled themselves straight edge, and then a few years down the road they try to abandon it, and the kids say, 'what the fuck you trying to do?' Like Kevin Seconds, some people still want to see him with the black under his eyes. Some people don't want you to ever change. And some people are going to want you to be a certain way, even if you're not that way.

Realistically, I know that everyone is not going to like American Standard. That's just a fact. But I would like different people from different cliques, if you will, or different walks of life, to listen to us and get into it. I wouldn't want just one type of crowd coming to our shows.

Q: That's tough in New York, because you only get to play in front of one type of crowd at the CBGB matinees.

Bill: It is tough. In different areas of the country that we've played, you always get different kinds of crowds. I think (in NY) there's a glorification of the street image. It's kids who aren't tough trying to be tough. Some of them. I've seen it, and you've seen it too, things have changed a lot from the way shows used to be in '82, '83. It's a different kind of crowd that comes to the shows now. And there are some people, not a lot, but some, who come from suburbia, come from good homes, and suddenly on Sunday they're trying to pretend they're squatters. That's something I never did. It was always, this is me, this is who I am, take it or leave it.

I like the New York crowd. For a while I was disillusioned, like in '84. Things seemed kind of stagnant, there were fights every weekend, it just wasn't fun anymore, and I stopped going to shows. But I think Youth Of Today really rejuvenated the whole scene. It was just kind of stagnant and they breathed new life into the whole thing.

Q: Although lately it seems like we're at the end of that cycle...

Bill: And another one will come. I don't know what it will be, but it'll be there.

Q: Does it ever bother you that the CB's crowd is so young?

Bill: No, it doesn't bother me at all. I'm definitely the old man there, but it doesn't bother me.

Q: But don't you wish older people came too?

Bill: Yeah, I do wish that. But also I like playing all ages shows. It's important to me that the doors are always open for everyone, not just the drinking crowd. Because I remember how important it was for me to be able to go to a show and not worry about being proofed and all that.

I think sometimes a band like American Standard doesn't get a chance with the younger crowd 'cause the younger kids want faster, harder music. Well, faster, not necessarily harder. But we'll see what happens. I don't think, honestly, we're very popular in New York. It's hard for me to judge how popular we are. We've never headlined, and I didn't want to headline before the record was out. We've played some great shows, like with Underdog or Murphy's Law, you know the place was packed not because of us but because of the other bands. And we're grateful we got to play there, and hopefully some people came to see the other bands and went away liking us too.

It's really hurt us that the record took as long as it did to come out. Because for a while there, we were getting a lot of mail, people had our demos, there was a lot of interest, and then there was just this big wait. But then again I am grateful in one respect that the record took as long as it did, because the record that would have come out back then wouldn't have been nearly as good as the one we just made now. We've learned so much.

'When you first get into the music, there's something really special and exciting. There was an integrity there, and there was something very personal. I really got into the fact that they were trying to break down the barriers of what you look like or what background you came from, they were trying to create this new thing with no boundaries. But then as time went on, all these boundaries were constructed, and it just seemed to me so futile. That's not why I got into it'

'I like playing all ages shows. It's important to me that the doors are always open for everyone, not just the drinking crowd. Because I remember how important it was for me to be able to go to a show and not worry about being proofed and all that'

Q: Anything you want to say about the record?

Bill: We produced it ourselves. We worked with an engineer named Kevin Reynolds and we recorded it at Chung King House of Metal in New York. For a first record, I'm really happy with it. For the next record, we have ideas already of what we want to do.

#### RELEASE

#### The Pain Inside

Axtion Packed, 6810 Glenbrook, Bethesda, MD 20814

Release are an awesome NJ/SE band who've got a 7" out on the Maryland-based Axtion Packed label, and I must say it's pretty damn good. The sound is reminiscent of many other straightedge releases, but there are many twists & turns in here to steer them away from being labeled "generic." There's definite growth apart from the pack here. Lyrically, they deal with topics such as betrayal, fucking up, and staying drug free, but all said in unique ways that'll make the average SE hater raise a brow or two. To sum up, hats off to Tim Owens and the rest of the Axtion Packed crew for an awesome package, and to Release, what can I say but "Great job!" (Hey, Rob, stay offa that wah-wah!)

#### VISION

#### In The Blink Of An Eye, lp

Nemesis

It's about time these guys got an lp out, and it's everything I expected. Anyone who's witnessed a Vision show knows how intense they are, and they've definitely captured it here. Choice cuts are "Again & Again," "What's Inside," and the soothing title cut. Definitely one of the best of '89, so don't miss out.

Vision, 701 Meadow, Bridgewater, NJ 08807



By Tony Rettman

VISION Photo by Ken Salerno



**BOLD** - Their album didn't come out in time to review this issue but here they are anyway.

#### GORILLA BISCUITS

#### Start Today, lp

Revelation

Now who said the NY straightedge scene couldn't grow & mature? Whoever said that will be seen eating their hat soon after hearing this release. From the stirring beginning of "New Direction" to the sudden ending of "Cats & Dogs," this sucker bleeds growth & change. I must say the Biscuits have outdone themselves this time. I can't really say I've heard anything like this before, so I can't compare it; just like the music, the lyrics are something everyone can get into and deal with. Topics range from tv addiction to procrastination, the feeling you get when you hurt someone's feelings, and the plain ole blues. I also recommend this to people who think they've got the whole SE thing nailed down and know what it's about; it might just open your mind. All in all, an excellent release.

#### BROTHERHOOD

#### No Tolerance...For Ignorance

Skate Edge, 9862 E. Pinewood, Englewood CO 80111

Seattle, WA's Brotherhood play a style of HC akin to HC days of yesterday - fast 'n thrashy some places, slow 'n moshy in others. But whichever way it goes, it's fucking awesome. Lyrically this deals with straight edge, loyalty, and of course, racism is covered in their already-classic anthem "No Tolerance." A good HC release I recommend that you pick up.

#### REACT

#### "When Will It End?" demo cassette

Another NJ band that's definitely on the rise. With a sound similar to early Underdog, REACT kick out 9 rockin' tunes dealing mostly with racism and friendship. If you like your HC hard, this be for you.

React, 1117 Cartagena, Bricktown, NJ 08723

#### THEATER OF ICE

"It's All Over Now"/"The Sound"/"Slave Bonfire"  
Orphanage, 1702 W. Camelback Rd. #315, Phoenix, AZ  
85015

This single, Theater of Ice's fourth, represents something of a departure from their Misfits-with-John Lydon-vocals days. This excellent 3-song ep is rumored to feature the recently released from prison Mike Doskocil (ex-Drunks With Guns) and sounds like the Minutemen doing Their Satanic Majesties Request. Limited edition, nice packaging. Pick Of The Month!

#### WARMJETS

"Wacked"/"Gentile Niggers Of White Noise"  
SOL

This may be the heaviest rocking release on Bob Mould's new SOL label ("Singles Only Label"). Nonetheless, it totally sucks.

#### THE BAGS

"Hide & Seek"/"I Know"

Stanton Park, Box 58, Newtonville MA 02160

Stanton Park has been a sort-of underachieving label but here's a release that's actually pretty solid. Still firmly rooted in the power pop-via-Sixties sound characteristic of the label, this one at least rocks out some. I'm still kinda mad at this band for stealing their name from a superior set of Bags - the Los Angeles Bags.

#### ANGEL DEAN (with Tony Maimone)

"Walkin' Talkin'"/"Spider's Web"

SOL

Another stinker from Bob Mould's new label. The geriatric photo of Pere Ubu's Tony Maimone on the sleeve makes this platter worth keeping if it's free, but I'm not mature enough yet to appreciate the kind of music that I hated more than life itself when I was 16.

#### ED'S REDEEMING QUALITIES

"Ed's Day" 4 song ep

Aurora, Box 2596, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130

This is an appealing, slightly cutesy ep that sounds a bit like the Silos Meet Beat Happening over at Camper Van Beethoven's apartment. If this sounds too college-radio for you, it probably is. But if that thought doesn't send you looking for a spoon to gag yourself with, you'll probably dig this limited-edition, red-vinyl platter just fine.



#### DAVID POSTLETHWAITE

"Truly Truly False"/"GE Moon"/"Change Of Heart"  
SOL

Guess whose new label released another dildoeey folk number? I just figured out Big Bob's angle - he wants to pollute the indie scene to make his Virgin lp look good by comparison, so people won't call him a sellout. Way to go, Bob!

#### BUSTED STATUES

"Red Clouds"/"The Bo Tree"  
Arf Arf, Box 860, E. Dennis, MA 02641

Boston's Busted Statues have been around for at least 6 years, maybe more, and their sound hearkens back to the old, Burma-created Christmas/Neats/Sorry school of post-punk. Ths A side has a Wire-esque guitar lead that hits the spot. This single may be a nostalgia piece of sorts but I like it just fine!

#### MIRACLE WORKERS

"Strange Little Girl"/"Green Fuz"  
Get Hip!, Box 666, Canonsburg, PA 15317

Talk about nostalgia pieces, this thing is retro even for the Miracle Workers! The A side would not be noticeably anachronistic on an Pebbles compilation, though the B side adds absolutely nothing to the original (on Pebbles #2) or the Cramps' version. A must for 6T's freaks, unnecessary for others.

#### MAD DADDYS

"Alligator Wine"/"Take Me Back To Woodstock"  
Sub-Pop

New Brunswick's Mad Daddys cash in on two of the most lucrative trends around - the Sub-Pop "Single Of The Month" and the two-covers 7". The odd thing is, they sound more like the Cramps than like Sub-Pop or the 60's (or Screamin' Jay). The thing is, there's really no reason for this to exist.

#### KILDOZER

"Lupus"/"Nasty"  
Touch & Go

Killdozer just keep getting better & better! "Lupus" heavily recalls their early smash "King Of Sex," altho it's got even more of that *je ne sais quoi* that makes this band able to reach out to people with no appreciation whatsoever of this genre. "Nasty," a Janet Jackson cover, makes me wish that these guys would give up the cover scene for a while.

#### BLISTERS

"Oozing Into Deutschland" EP

German import, or from The Blisters, Box 166, Green Village, NJ 07935

The Blisters - the Garden State's Cheap Trick - are one of those regional resources that are so much a part of their landscape that it's almost as hard to imagine a NJ without them as it is to imagine the Blisters without NJ. This is their 3rd 7" release (an album is coming soon) and it's as good as its predecessors. Though they have a European deal now, don't expect the Blisters to go global, or even national. They're too specific, and too good.

#### MUDHONEY

"You've Got It"/"Burn It Clean"  
Sub-Pop, Box 20645, Seattle WA 98102

Believe the hype! Mudhoney are the #1 very best band in the world today and though I believe as much as any backslasher that they'll suck one day, that day has not yet come. This single is top drawer and only the A side will be on their upcoming lp. Definitely recommended.

#### TAD/PUSSY GALORE

"Damaged I"/"Damaged II"  
Sub-Pop

The Pussy Galore side is better than the Tad side. And as is always the case with these coverfests (except for Killdozer), neither is as good as the original. Ignore.

# Constant Listener

*a column by Jim Testa*



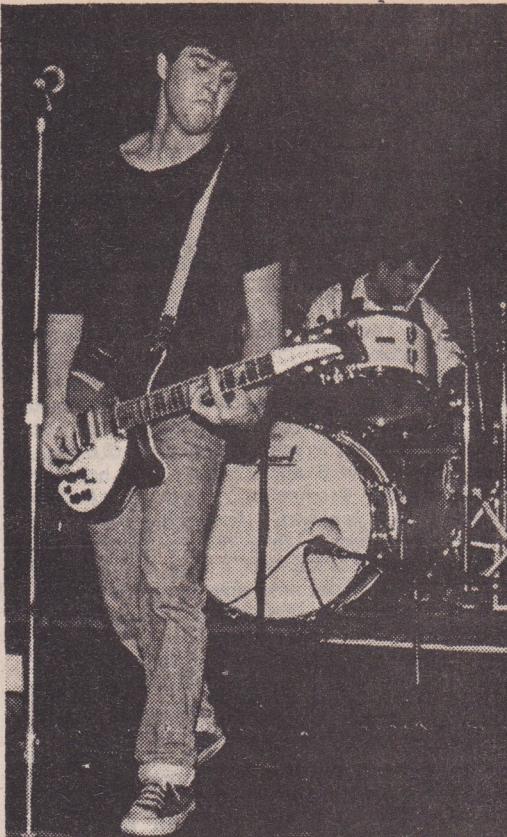
Just when most of the major labels are announcing in all their wisdom that they'll no longer tinker around with 7" promo singles - when, in fact, seven-inch records look like they belong on the same endangered species list as sperm whales and honest Republicans - indie labels are rediscovering the single with a gusto unseen since the heyday of do-it-yerself punkdom back in the late 70's. Bob Mould is launching the Singles Only Label (SOL), Sub-Pop has turned the pigfucker world on its head with its Singles Of The Month Club (everyone a collector's item no matter how much they suck as music), and little labels like Lookout are using singles to introduce their new discoveries. Plus there's all the fun of picture sleeves, lyric inserts...yeah, man, singles are a lot more fun than CD's. Fuck the future, let's party.

Speaking of Big Bob Mould, one of the smartest things he did (second only to ditching the Flying-V and that dumpy drummer of his) was sign up **FRICITION WHEEL**, a college-age combo that hangs out at Maxwells a lot (even tho none of them lives in Hoboken, I guarantee you'll see them called a "Hoboken Band" all over the place). Their vinyl debut is a SOL single, "Something Tells Me" b/w "Won't Fall Down." Hard to believe that a year ago, everybody said these boys would never get anywhere 'cos they sounded too much like R.E.M. Today, you'd get a quick kick in the butt from anyone with any brains who heard that remark; sure, they've still got Rickenbacker guitars, but the twang has been replaced by a good beefy drone and post-Husker guitar wallop (thanks agin', Bob) and Willie Lopez' from-the-heart vocals really put this one over the top. Nice to know I can still pick 'em.

Another label heavily into singles is California's Lookout Records. With their early track record - Op Ivy, Crimpshine, etc - I'm ready to listen to just about anything they have to offer, and boy howdy, was I happy when the debut 45 from GREEN DAY showed up in my mailbox. Imagine Husker Du playing Plimsouls songs - big fat wall-of-noise guitars but these irresponsibly melodic 6T's influenced songs. "Dry Ice" and "Only Of You" and "1000 Hours" and "The One I Want" are the 4 songs; you're gonna want to own all of them. Also from Lookout come KAMALA & THE KARNIVORES with their "Girl Band" 7-inch EP. Fans of grungy 6T's girl-band rock 'n roll like the Pandoras or The Brood will dig these wayout chicks (and guys - Matt from Op Ivy sits in on bass). Great songs with a feminine perspective, like "Love Like Murder," described on the inner sleeve as "a good song to cry over your ex-boyfriend who dumped you by." Couldn't've said it better myself.

Also in a decidedly 60's groove is the new 45 by Pittsburgh's THE CYNICS, "Get My Way"/"Goin' Away." The single really is this band's format - every one they've put out just rules, wild stompin' party music with glorious grunge/farfisa keyboard and wild vox, and this one is no exception. Play it LOUD.

*photo by Andy Peters*



**FRICITION WHEEL**

About as loud as you'd play Tampa, Florida's **PINK LINCOLNS** would be about right. Here's another combo with something of a slight 60's garage influence, juiced up with hardcore-fast tempos and gallons of adrenalin. They've come up with a great song, too, ostensibly about "Cotton Mather" but perfect in this new age of demagoguery - it could just as easily be about Louis Farrakhan or Ray Cappo. The flip is a pulverizing quickie done in German (?) called "I Do," which also happens to be the answer to the question, "Do you love this single?"

Finally, there's the folks at Sub Pop, who've cashed in on this new Singlesmania big-time, turning every indie/pigfuck record buyer into a rabid collector by deliberately limiting the pressings of their Singles Of The Month and then finding the hippest bands around to record. One of my faves is the 45 from **FLAMING LIPS**, with a re-worked version of "Drug Machine" (from the Telepathic Surgery lp) done Sub-Pop (i.e. Mudhoney) style - slow and brain-clobbering. The flip is a cool medley of the old 60's psyche-rocker "Strychnine" and Elvis C.'s "What's So Funny 'Bout Peace, Love & Understanding," done hard and heavy and loud. Turn it up and let it spin.

## Labels

SOL, PO Box 272, Pine City, MN 55063  
Lookout, PO Box 1000, Laytonville CA 95454  
Get Hip!, PO Box 666, Canonsburg PA 15317  
Pink Lincolns, 7215 N. Highland, Tampa FL 33604  
Sub-Pop, Box 20645, Seattle WA 98102

The first thing you have to understand about the New Music Seminar is that it doesn't really have anything to do with music; its purpose is to provide a forum for the discussion of the business of music, and that's a whole 'nother thing. So if there's a panel on songwriting, it's about "how to write a Number 1 song." The "fanzine panel" wasn't called that; it was called "The Selling Of The Underground - An Overrated Market?" I had never realized before that's what I've been doing for 7 years. Live & learn. Yeah, I certainly got my money's worth from NMS.

This obsession with turning punk rock into dollars creates some weird scenarios - this year best exemplified by Old Skull. I'm sure you've heard of Old Skull by now, the 8 and 9 year old hardcore band from Wisconsin. Old Skull were feted and praised, interviewed way past their bedtimes. They played the Ritz and the Rapp Arts Center, they got on MTV. They are a hype, and anyone even remotely associated with them should be ashamed of themselves.

Okay, let's look at it this way. Let's say you're not Old Skull but one of the other acts on the Restless Records roster - Electric Love Muffin or 7 Seconds. Here you've been sleeping on floors, eating bread sandwiches, and generally devoting your every waking hour for 6 or 7 or 9 years to your band - and along comes a bunch of 9 year olds who can't even play their instruments, and your label goes ga-ga getting them all the publicity, tour support, and promotion that you've been begging for. Nobody said life was fair.

I am not going to mention anything else about NMS, except maybe for my visit to the Giant Records booth, where the new label manager told me, "It's a whole new label, we got rid of all that hardcore stuff." Debbie, I liked all that hardcore stuff. Well, they did sign the Slickee Boys and Peter (Squirrel Bait) Searcy's new band, so maybe...

## *Diary Of A Rock Critic*

### NMS DIARY

*Those Melvins*



*Ultra Vivid Scene*



Herewith, the diary of a Rock Critter during 5 frenzied nights on the town, the only really worthwhile part of NMS anyway...

Continued on next page



*Naked Raygun*

## DIARY OF A ROCK CRITTER

### HEAVY MENTAL LIVE

HEAVY MENTAL LIVE is a one hour cassette compilation of HEAVY MENTAL'S performances at the 1986, 1987 and 1988 Lincoln Park Peace Festivals. Live concert material includes cuts from the FREE TAPE, ECONOMIC GROWTH, ATOMIC SHOCKABILY, and their upcoming PEACE TANK LP. The sound quality is good and it's only \$5.00. As always, return postage is paid.

### COMIC BOOK

THE ADVENTURES OF HEAVY MENTAL is a comic in the same vein as the Freak Bros. Publications. It is the first in a series we have planned. Many who have seen HEAVY MENTAL'S posters have suggested we do a comic book. So, we did. Will Ronald Reagan assassinate our Heavy Mental heroes? Will John Kinkly, who breaks out of San Quentin, get another crack at Ronald Reagan? The Cast of Characters also includes: Popie the sailor, Geraldo Rivera, Edwin Meese, Dan Quayle and his wife, George Bush, and we couldn't forget Batman and Robin. **WARNING:** Though the content isn't really pornographic, the material may be offensive to parents, Geraldo Rivera fans, and most definitely CONSERVATIVES. So, don't say we didn't warn you! Oh yes, the price is \$2.00.

COMIC BOOK for \$2.00.  
cassette for \$5.00

Persistent Productions  
P.O. Box 777  
send cash, check  
or money order to: Evanston, IL 60204  
U.S.A.

Friday, July 14: Big show at the Ritz. Old Skull (sheesh!), Laughing Hyenas, Mudhoney, and Sonic Youth (celebrating their signing to Goofen, excuse me, Geffen Records). We walk in as Old Skull is winding up their set, the singer/guitarist destroying his ax Pete Townsend-like (sure bet he didn't have to pay for it) while the "bassist" sits on the floor banging on a metal plaque with a hammer. Punk rock, man. Don't trust anybody over 10, ok? Laughing Hyenas are loud but one-dimensional, a non-stop drone that sounds like one long interminable song thru the first 3/4 of their set until they finally change tempos. Mudhoney pretty much get the crowd riled up, goofy and fun, "Touch Me I'm Sick" sounds pretty cool even in a mausoleum like the New Ritz. Next come Sonic Youth, tongue in cheek as always, playing a ton of old shit and goofing on Geffen (playing Madonna and Guns 'N Roses samples 'tween songs, fr'instance). Will success spoil Sonic Youth? Naah.

Saturday, July 15th

Check in at the Marriott Marquis. Going up the escalator to pick up my badge and bagful of goodies and within 5 minutes meet Jad Fair, Mike Gitter, half of Alice Donut, Agnostic Front's Steve Martin, and Old Skull (who are skateboarding thru the hotel giving out flyers for their next show). Show business is my life.

Continued on next page



4 p.m. CBGB Hardcore Matinee. Jerry's Kids are a no-show but I stay for Head's Up, John Bello's newest signing to Hawker Records. Funny, funky Chili Pepperish punk rock, don't tell anybody but I was actually dancing to this. Gitter sidled over and says they sucked, a sure sign Bello has a winner.

9 p.m. For no good reason, go to Bitter End to check out Those Melvins from Connecticut. Actually, I had a reason - their cut on the "No Milk" compilation pushed all my power-pop buttons. Turns out the Melvins are a frat band, 30ish dudes with beards and Bermuda shorts who look like they'd be comfortable doing a whole set of Poco covers. With the exception of one or two cuts (they've got one grabber that sounds like a lost dB's classic), their nerdy organic poptoons don't impress. Lead singer has the set list scribbled on successive layers of t-shirts, which he keeps peeling off to reveal the next song. Cute.

10:30 p.m. Toddle over to Gonzalez Y Gonzalez, a Mexican restaurant pressed into service as a club when Downtown got padlocked a week before NMS. Turns out Enigma is having a pre-show party to which I wasn't invited, but Brian from Electric Love Muffin sneaks me in anyway for some free beer and nachos (this is called "networking"). Next stop is Under Acme, a non-Seminar show with Friction Wheel, who just keep getting better and

Continued on next page



Tourists, hangin' out

JULY 18-19, 1988  
MARRIOTT MARQUIS HOTEL  
NEW YORK CITY

**JIM**  
Testa

# airlines

**Test/Ambulance Dance**

**The debut single.**

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\$3 post paid. Box 6425, Minneapolis, MN 55406.

Also available: the new LP by  
the 27 Various, **Yes, Indeed!**



better. Bob Mould, who produced their single, is there, also not wearing an NMS badge.

Sunday, April 16th

9:30 p.m. Toxic Shock Night at the CBGB Canteen and House Of Large Sizes opens the evening. I didn't much care for their lp but live they're a lot better, more forceful and less archaically "new wave." Next door at CBGB it's Homestead Night, and I keep shuffling back & forth. Happy Flowers turn out to be a lot younger and a lot more normal than I had pictured them (with names like Mr. Anus and Mr. Horribly Charred Infant, I was expecting two burnt-out 30ish ex-hippies, sorta Shimmydisc material, if you wanna know the truth). Giant Sand are every bit as boring live as their record. Death of Samantha rocks but I have to leave.

1:25 a.m. Speed The Plough finally go on for the "11:30 p.m." showcase at the Bitter End. It has been pouring all night and I spent most of the evening trudging up & down Bleeker St. from CBGB's waiting for them to go on, so even tho' they're as transcendently tuneful as ever, I am wet, tired, and too cranky to have any fun.

Monday, July 17th

9:30 p.m. I've heard a lot about Too Much Joy from California, including a rave mention of their 2nd lp by Dean Christgau (during his keynote speech at SXSW, no less). Said lp is nowhere to be found anywhere in Manhattan, by the way; I tried 6 different stores, incl. Pier Platters in Hoboken, Tower, Bleeker Bobs, Sounds, and a few others. Great - they travel 3000 miles to showcase their act and their label doesn't have 1 copy of the record in the biggest market in America. I kept trying to convince myself these gomers were actually as wacky and zany as they were trying to come across on stage, but it didn't wash. The songs aren't bad but I could do without all the mugging, jumping, and corny choreography. Next up is Fabian Blue, a teenager from the South Bronx with an 8 piece band, fuck-me good looks, and massive soul/crossover potential, kinda like a younger, male Whitney Houston, or Robbie Rosa with better material. Next door at the Canteen, the Jacklords were opening up Skyclad Night. With 2 ex-Splatcats, they were expectedly 60'ish garage, plenty of strong hooky tunes and some neat surf/gtr breaks. Now I know why Yod Crewzy quit the Splits - he sings and plays guitar better'n the other 'cats and never got to take centerstage.



## DIARY OF A ROCK CRITTER

11:30 p.m. A quick trip over to the Rapp Arts Center - a converted schoolhouse and an ideal venue to fill the vacuum left by the death of Irving Plaza - for Nice Strong Arm (manic psycho Gerardo metal) and Naked Raygun, who ripped the place in two. Turns out this was also the farewell performance for Raygun gtr John Haggerty. They closed with a tribute to Government Issue, covering "Where You Live." Bitchin'. Word came out later that their label decided at the last minute not to pay their airfare, so the Rayguns had to fly in from Chicago, rent a car, pay for a hotel, and fly back all out of their own pocket.

Tuesday, July 18th

9 p.m. Started the night off at the Philadelphia Booth party, hosted by Carol Schutzbach and featuring various Love Muffins, Orifices, Zoobys, and others. Lots of demo swapping and whatnot, Frank's soda, Philly subs, even got a t-shirt from some cheesesteak joing. Then we all subwayed over to CBGB for one of the weirdest bills of the week: All, Bullet LaVolta, and the Swans. All did a long set full of slower, more tuneful songs - probably glad they weren't playing to a roomful of 16 year olds - while Bullet LaVolta rocked per usual. I didn't hang around for the Swans but crosstowned it to Avenue A for Ultra Vivid Scene's show at King Tut's Wah Wah Hut. Rumor had it that Kurt (Mr UVS) was offered a chance to play the big opening night party with George Clinton but opted instead for this postage-stamp sized venue; it couldn't have been more than 105 degrees inside, packed shoulder to shoulder, everybody swaying to the band's hypnotizing melodies and offbeat instrumentation (cello, keyboards, minimal drums, distorto gtr). After UVS, I wander back to CBGB, where most everybody is outside getting some air. Highlight of the evening comes when Chicken John of Letch Patrol tries to give G.Cosloy one of their demos, whereupon Mr. C boinks John in the kisser, throws the tape to the ground, and steps on it. That demo was a classic Letch Patrol move, too - full cover cover, printed cassette with band name and song titles, the most professional-looking demo I saw at the seminar. Except there wasn't any tape in the cassette, just about 2 inches of leader. Ho ho ho.

My notes say "Hank Williams" after that but I have no idea why.

Wednesday, July 19th

Went to bed at 10 p.m. and lapsed into a coma.

It should probably be noted (again & again) that the bands are the most exploited aspect of NMS - they usually don't get paid, often travel across the country to play these showcases, and the bands who wind up on those NMS Unsigned Bands cassettes even wind up paying big bucks for the privilege. The clubs rake in a fortune from the bar (NMS'ers are, after all, conventioneers...and drink like longshoremen), even the taxi drivers make out like bandits.

But then, just think of the souvenirs that Old Skull will have for show 'n tell in September. Was it worth it? You betcha.

by Bruce Lee Gallanter

ROBERT MUSSO

Absolute Music, cassette & CD only  
Mu, 111 4th Ave., #5A, New York, NY

Bob Musso is a kindred spirit, a good friend, as well as a fellow audial explorer and source of inspiration. A well-respected engineer and producer in NYC, he thrives in extreme music situations - most recently as producer for the acoustic wizardry of Yomo Toro, to the punk/funk insanity of 24-7 Spyz, to those hardcore jesters, Murphy's Law. Always getting the best results... He started his own label, MU Records, and released the amazing debut by Machine Gun, an all-star jazz/rock/funk/noise improv unit from Rutgers that he co-leads. Their second killer effort is about to be released. Musso plays both lead gtr and 6-string bass in Machine Gun, and since the band is based in totally free spirits, he has had such noise/rock guitar gods as Sonny Sharrock and Elliott Sharp sit in.

Although Machine Gun's music is often loud, confrontational, abrasive, and even scary, Bob also has this other side which utilizes fully the enduring (but often overlooked) wonder of melodic world musics. He has spent much time in Japan in the past few years (often with friend and producer Bill Laswell), and owns a most impressive collection of varied world musics. Hence the release of his solo debut, Absolute Music, shouldn't really be that much of a surprise...but it sure is a delight!

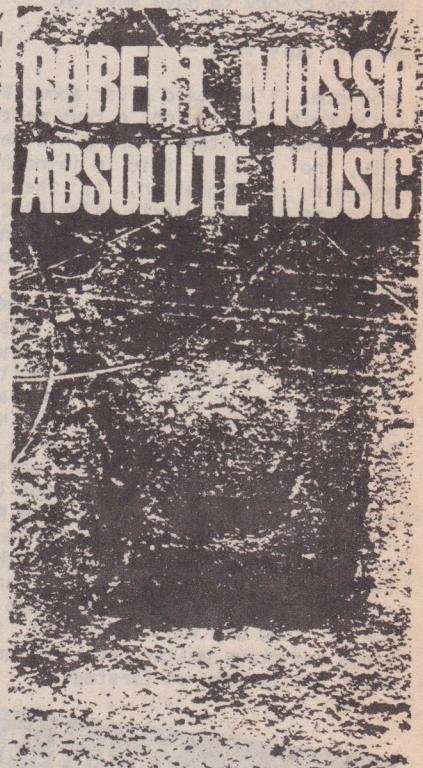
Outside of a small bass part on one piece by Laswell, this is completely a solo effort. Bob played only various stringed instruments - acoustic and electric guitars, basses, mandolins, as well as exotic Oriental instruments that only an expert could identify. On four of the tracks (about half of the whole), the melodic center and soft tones are truly soothing. It's quite rare to hear an effort nowadays with no electronic percussion or synth - it has made Musso completely concentrate on the full spectrum of colors found within guitars. It made me realize that if someone's rhythmic center is strong, it pulls one along without the obvious use of drums.

All of the pieces have a perfect balance of world musics, always well integrated in each piece. On "Kithara Mu," the groove is provided by some swinging acoustic jazz guitars, yet the main solo is by a cosmic e-bow tone - dazzling, sharp, and assured. Musso isn't afraid to select even the subtlest of a pure Eastern phrase to brighten up "Surakarta." "Celtify" is most aptly titled, like a happy jig, with the guitars and mandolins sounding positively triumphant.

Although "Orientation" also contains the usual balance of melodic ethnic sections, the mood gets more uptempo and aggressive. The lead gtr line is totally gripping & pumping in spirit. Watch out!! "Music of the Spheres" also features some of the same pumping-type groove, but takes it even further. What is most interesting about this piece is the different layers of acoustic/electric, distorted and pure-toned string sounds. With them groovy wah-wah parts and dense overall picture, I'd swear this was done on a synthesizer.

The finale is titled "Sounds of the Apocalypse" and it is one immensely thick cosmic soup! Various distinct layers of feedback and unorthodox string manipulations are suspended together in a unique environment of spirits cut loose and rejoicing in their freedom. More breathtaking than overwhelming, where the underlying thread is one the listener must discern in order to complete the journey of comprehension. Absolutely essential listening!

# Absolutely Essential Listening



I'M GOING TO MAKE SICK, MURDEROUS WEAPONS FOR THE PENTAGON. THIS WILL ESCALATE THE EXISTING TENSIONS BETWEEN THE SUPERPOWERS. HENCE, CAUSING AN ALL-OUT THERMO-NUCLEAR WAR.



© 1988 JEFFREY

#### AIRLINES

"Test"/"Ambulance Dance" 45

Susstones

Airlines are Hoboken's newest band, but their roster should be familiar to local scenesters. Featuring members of Speed The Plough and ex-members of The Ex-Lion Tamers and Great Wall, this debut 7" (released, for some reason, on a Minneapolis label) recalls Chairs Missing-era Wire as consciously and explicitly as the Urinals and Mission of Burma recalled Pink Flag-era Wire. The A side is more successful than the B side and I'm anxious to hear these homeboys' local live debut so I can find out what they're really made of. The single? Definitely recommended.

- Ken Katkin

#### AMERICAN STANDARD

Wonderland, lp

Powerhouse

American Standard's long-awaited debut burns with a passion so bright, it will keep you warm and well-lit all winter. Bill Dolan's vocals literally ignite every cut, singing like a man possessed, holding onto every note, every syllable like a drowning sailor clutching a life preserver. The title Wonderland couldn't be more ironic, as the band has compiled a collection of songs filled with torment, pain, betrayal, anger, and disillusionment. As Matt Dolan's fiery guitar churns quick, hard-stroked chords and the machine-like rhythm section quickens the pace, the lyrics trace one man's search for identity and contentment, only to be beaten back time and again by acts of betrayal: "I've seen the future/and I've lived the past/and I've had such bitter feelings/since the spell was cast/So then I told the mirror/who I wanted to be/and then I smashed the glass/to set myself free." Add to all that Matt Dolan's inventive intros, which range from savage Motorhead-inspired metal to Byrdsian psychedelia and you've got one of the year's best hardcore lps, hands down. Yes, the DC influence is there; but these aren't adolescent buddy songs about going straightedge or weepy self-indulgent emo-core ballads. Never mind Dag Nasty; here's a higher standard.

- Jim Testa

#### WINTER HOURS

Winter Hours, lp

Chrysalis

This NJ band's eponymously-titled, major label debut is, first and foremost, NOT a country-rock lp. I know that's a lot of commas for one sentence; but hey, I'm tired of listening to misinformation spread by people too lazy to get past the steel and banjo of "Roadside Flowers." It's a rock'n'roll album - one that you can even shimmy your shoulders in time to. I mean, are the Rolling Stones classified as country? They did do "Dead Flowers" and "No Expectations."

That out of the way, the lp has some good - dare I say great - rock songs. From the extremely danceable "Just Like Love" to the pleasant folk-rock of "Carpenters' Square" to the "Rock Ballad"-esque "Broken Little Man" (Elliot Murphy pun intended - all you cool kids should check out his early stuff) to, yes, the country-tinged opening track, "Roadside Flowers," or finally, to the Doors memories of "Longest Century." Rock is alive and well; fell in love with the ecology-minded "Roadside Flowers."

Lead guitarist Michael Carlucci still plays with the best of them, lending beautiful slide to the peaceful "These Familiar Places." He can rock out in "Longest Century" and "Rise" without sounding overblown. The new guitar god of the underground?

"Stay With Me" and "Rise" could've been written about China's Tiananmen Square, had it not been written and recorded before the Red Army's attack on the students June 4th.

There have been other Winter Hours records I have liked more (Producer Lenny Kaye was a bit heavy-handed on the "slick" button on this one), but this lp will still stay on my turntable for a long time.

- Pattie Kleinke

[Another view of Winter Hours appears elsewhere in this issue]

## PICK

## HITS



## AIRLINES



**OLD SKULL**

Get Outta School, lp  
Blast First/Restless

I think Old Skull sound like a bunch of drunk kids busting into a studio, destroying equipment and beating each other up. I really think my cat Pookie can sing better than them. They sound a lot like all the rebellious rock bands my dad listens to put together - like the Swans, Happy Flowers, and Carbon. The only song title I like is "Kill A Dead Eagle." What I want to know is why they started a punk band when they were so young (they are all 8 or 9 nine years old).

The only thing I like about this album is the drumming. Jesse Collins must've practiced a lot. I think they're lucky because they have a 10-year old critic like me to review their album from their point of view. I'd be surprised if they ever get a video on MTV or VH-1. Personally, coming from deep down inside myself, I think Old Skull are too young to have started a punk band. I think this summer they should play Nintendo rather than playing in their group.

- Severin Wuelfing, age 10

**HOUSE OF LARGE SIZES**

One Big Cake, lp  
Toxic Shock (Box 43787, Tucson AZ 85733)  
This could easily have been on Sub

Pop, with its grungy rock feel. Not as dirty as Mudhoney but it'd still appeal to that crowd. I think HoLS have been listening to Led Zep, and that's not always a bad thing. Great drumming and bass and some interesting guitar, but most of the songs never seem to really let loose. Crank up some of these tracks like "Eisenhower," "Pain Is A Pain," and "Flying" to get a good feel for the ingredients of this One Big Cake. I like this...but then, I like girls with crooked teeth.

- Tom A.

**THE SCENE IS NOW**  
Tonight We Ride, lp  
Lost/Twintone

The rigorous lumpy bump o' The Scene Is Now's no-wave genesis has mellowed and broadened into an outmeal jass-informed pop thang that reminds me greatly of solo John Simon, or some early Band. Chris Nelson continues to grow as a singer and his elastic twang is close to where Peter Holsapple might've gotten if him and Stamey had never sighted potential commercial success on the horizon (not saying they ever actually connected with it!!). And there are enough vestigial Beefheartisms to give it sufficient bite to appeal to hardline bohos. All in all, not fierce, but distinctly reet.

- Howard W.



# RECORDS



**F U G A Z I**

## Records & Stuff We Sell:

35. FUGAZI	'Margin Walker' EP†	(B)
34. SOULSIDE	3-song 7"	(C)
32. STATE OF THE UNION	BENEFIT + SAMPLER	(A)
31. IGNITION	'Machination'	(A)
30. FUGAZI	7-song EP†	(B)
29. SOULSIDE	'Trigger'	(A)
28. FIRE PARTY	6-song EP	(B)
27. MINOR THREAT	Live video. VHS only.	(D)
26. DAG NASTY	Wig Out at Denko's +	(A)
25. SCREAM	Banging the Drum LP†	(A)
24. EMBRACE	14-song LP	(A)
23. BEEFEATER	'House Burning Down'	(A)
22. RITES OF SPRING	4-song 7"	(C)
21. GRAY MATTER	'Take It Back' EP	(B)
20. EGG HUNT	2-song 7"	(C)
19. DAG NASTY	'Can I Say' 10-song LP†	(A)

† Also available as cassette.

## Price Guide, including postage, in U.S. \$:

	USA	Canada	OverSea	OverAir
(A)	6.00	7.00	7.00	11.00
(B)	5.00	6.00	6.00	10.00
(C)	3.00	3.50	4.00	6.00
(D)	25.00	27.00	28.00	30.00

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They are higher.



Please send us a  
stamp for a full  
list of records.

3819 BEECHER ST. NW, WASH., DC. 20007

ZULUS

Down On The Floor, lp  
Slash/Warner Bros.

So this is how Boston "graver" loss leaders Human Sexual Respo make their reentry into the wack world of "new music" - Zep Wave bandwagon-hopping! Well, having not previously deigned to plumb the punken side o' said phenom ala' Sound Garden et al., my burnout quotient's kinda low, so...sounds okey to me. Not great, but I must admit that having the Mould-y ripples of guilt-overdrive excelsior boldly pierced by jutting ribs o' Brit post-blues proto-Metallica riffage redeems the collegiate jangle-fluff quite a bit. Even so, how much does it all add up to finally? Not even to tempest-in-teacup stature. It's much more product to be efficiently narrowcasted and slowly nurtured market-wise.

- Howard W.

CHEMICAL PEOPLE

Ten Fold Hate, lp  
Cruz (Box 7756, Long Beach CA 90807)

Well, let's see, this has an EYE catching cover, catchy music and hilarious lyrics. What more could one ask? Take the singer to the Lemonheads (first lp) and have him front a band that enjoys All, Descendents, pornos, and a slight taste for metallish-guitar. That's what this sounds like, sort of - 15 songs, 1 cover ("Vacation," by the Go Go's), a couple instrumentals, and most of the originals deal with girls (while some deal with food and Aquaman). It's not wonder they have a fetish for dirty movies, they're uglier than sin. If taken too seriously, it's gonna offend. Take a chance...

VARIOUS ARTISTS

State Of The Union, lp  
Dischord (3819 Beecher St SW, D.C. 20007)

This compilation is a joint effort by Dischord, Sammich, and Positive Force DC, and the proceeds go to the Community For Creative Non-Violence and the ACLU. It's a shame those causes need to exist but this is an incredible record. Music ranges from acoustic to hardcore to (unusual) reggae and everything in between. Standouts include Scream, Soulside ("Name In Mind," from their last lp), Ignition (live version of "Anger Means"), Marginal Man, Fugazi, Fidelity Jones, Shudder To Think, 3, Red Emma, and Kingface. 16 bands in all, plus a booklet of lyrics and photos and a collection of writings from various sources about the 'state of the union.' And hey, a photo of Tomas Squip, naked! How's that for a change of pace! That aside, this is a MUST!

- Tom A.

VINYL

Ok, let's get rolling. HONOR ROLE's new lp Rictus on Homestead is quite a doozy - 10 cool tunes categorized as beautiful, offbeat buzz rock. Funny, but when bands get too unpredictable, they become headache bands like the shit-eating Gaye Bikers On Acid. That's not the case with Honor Role - they disjoint just enough to make it weird, throw you off, break up what monotony ther eis, and then come back around & crawl up your ass, just like those horrible wedgies that the high school bully used to give you. Vocals point slightly to John Stabb and the lyrics are impressive, with an almost *deja vu* quality. Even the production of the gtr seems to vary from song to song. Yes, this is what alternative music is about. Indulge yourself with this one. Too bad that the new HAPPY FLOWERS lp, Oof, also on Homestead, isn't too hot. That's only because it's their 3rd full-length record of the same shit. Although there are some actual "tunes," the title are always funnier than their songs and their act is just getting redundant and booooring. Shimmydisc has recently issued a VELVET MONKEYS retrospective, Rotting Corpse A Go Go, and it's quite needed. Don (B.A.L.L.) Fleming's earlier folly, remixed and remastered by Kramer for your listening pleasure, serves up tasty tunes designed to damage. Pop gtrs that love to rock and hate you to death. Some tunes have that low-end Gibson SG crunch that you got addicted to while shooting up to Black Sabbath in high school. "Nothing Unusual" is a teen-hate anthem - first band to cover it wins my entire Homestead collection (except for the new Giant Sand lp, of course). That would bring us to MARGINAL MAN, this self-titled lp out on Giant this time around hits the nail right on the head. MM faced pressure from early fans who didn't want to hear metal, too much hardcore, and wanted something new. This perfect compromise has them maintaining their super touch, a melodic, soulful and mildly hardcore journey through early influences and into new ideas, logic, and music. Cool guitar work, encouraging if sad lyrics, and the spirit of D.C. make it impossible to pick out just one standout cut. Getting back to Shimmydisc, there's Lyrics By Ernest Noyes Brookings, a compilation of bands who have written music to the lyrics of this strange old codger who died in 1987. Among the superstars here we find Jad Fair, Kramer (best cut), Christmas, Eugene Chadbourne, and the usual cast of loonies. It's actually quite a pisser, just don't take it too seriously. Finally visiting the West Coast we get the debut from SWALLOW on Seattle's impressive Sub-Pop label. Can't understand why I wuz expecting anything different than the usual Stooges-influenced gtr rock, but it doesn't matter 'cos this is still good. Last year Swallow gave us a 7" that was definitely among the best of '88, a little less distorted and more

## John Lisa

melodic than the likes of Mudhoney. It seems that their slower rock ballads with catchy choruses are alittle more memorable than the 60's crunch riffs. Vocals once again are typical of Sub-Pop - they sound like Mudhoney's Mark Arm or Gang Green's Chris Dougherty straining to hit higher notes and having to curse their throats to do so. The track called "Guts" was previously released on last year's single so those of you who missed out on getting that can now hear one of the tunes which helped start the big Sub-Pop sensation. (The flip of that single, "Trapped," is unfortunately not on the lp.) jack Endino does his usual fine job producing and the band rocks heavily, with very nice tempo changes. Fun cover art too. In this case, you can believe the Sub-Pop hype.

But beware all else.

UNDERDOG

The Vanishing Point, lp

Caroline

Underdog gives back to New York Hardcore what it's been missing since the straightedge positive kids took over the scene - strength of character and a diversity of sound. New guitarist Chuck Teece lends the biting reggae guitar leads here, but for the most part, this is not a guitar-oriented record (unusual for a "hardcore" band). It's Richie Birkenhead's vocals and lyrics that take command, underscored by the ferociously tight rhythm section (Russ on bass, Dean on drums). The guitars on most of these tracks seem almost an afterthought or an undercurrent.

Richie's songs explore the theme of the "underdog" rising from the role of the oppressed to eventually triumph over the oppressors, and they do it in two ways. On the more reggae influenced numbers, it's the spiritual side that wins out - esp. in the song "No Matter What," which extends the "underdog" metaphor to include indigenous Third World peoples and is the soaring triumph of the album. On the harder, more hardcore songs like "Over The Edge" and "Underdog," the physical side wins out. There's five years of CBGB's history - the cameraderie in the pit as well as the bloody fisticuffs out on the street - summed up in "Back To Back": "We stand and fight/back to back/we take no shit/we stand tight/we use our heads, not our fists/unless we're pushed/as one we fight/and we win." As someone who's literally watched Richie grow up hanging around on the corner of Bleeker & Bowery on Sunday afternoons, I understand where those words are coming from (and if you've ever seen these guys jump in to break up fights, you know they stand behind their words), but I can't help wishing they'd leave the songs about fighting to Warzone and concentrate on singing sweeter songs instead. Underdog doesn't really write melodic songs, which is a pity; Richie has a wonderful voice. On this album, he uses it mostly to growl and holler; it's powerful, emotional stuff, but nowhere near as mesmerizing as when he sings "Come Together" on stage. These guys have been fighting the music business and their own personal setbacks for years trying to get this album out; maybe now they can stop proving how tough they are and show us how big their hearts are instead.

- Jim Testa

THE CHILDREN

The Children, lp

ILA

You know, I liked it better a few years ago when there were a lot of records I couldn't get as promos, but at least the promos I got were records. Now these indie labels try to capitalize on this massive glut of fanzines and service them all, so they scrimp on product and send out these generic promo-only cassettes. Then they tack on these half-assed "press releases" that must've been written by the guitar's player mother. No, I take that back; the guitar player's mother would have mentioned the guitar player's name somewhere. So based on what I know (next to nothing) about The Children, let me just say they have a sweet, textured folk/rock sound with country influences; the guy who sings sounds a bit like Richard Thompson, with a real authority to his voice; but the girl who sings grates on me with her cutesy-poo new-wave inflections. Or as they used to say in the movies, Loved Him, Hated Her.

- Jim T.

**UNDERDOG**

*Photo by Michele (Little Mo)*

WINTER HOURS

Winter Hours, lp

Chrysalis

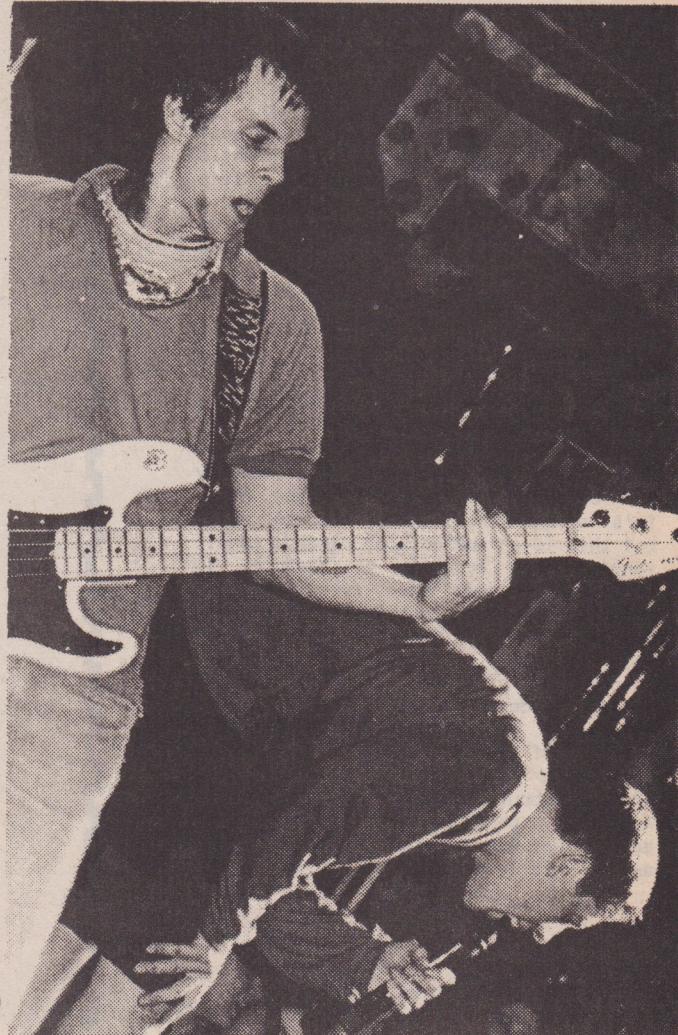
I am been struggling to find the word that describes Winter Hours and it's finally come to me: Canadian.

It's not just that their dirgey ballads remind me of Gordon Lightfoot and Leonard Cohen at their soggiest, although there is that connection. In a larger sense, Canada has been flooding this country for years with ersatz apple-pie Americana, from Bryan Adams to Michael J. Fox.

Listen to this Winter Hours record - their fourth album, first for Chrysalis - and you hear an American guitar band pushing all the right buttons. At least no one is going to say they sound like R.E.M. anymore. But listen a little more closely - the rock songs don't really rock out, the love songs have no passion, and the sensitive, poetic stuff touches no real emotions. Nothing on this record is really about anything except a band making another record. I guess that's the meaning of the word "commercial." Compare them to a band that sings with real feeling - Souled American, say, or more locally, Friction Wheel - and Winter Hours come off as pretty, polished, and totally plastic; the aural equivalent of a bowl of wax fruit.

I'm not at all surprised this band got signed to a major label - I won't deny they've worked hard for it - but I'd probably appreciate singer Joe Marques' remarks about the "honesty" of these songs a lot more if I could believe in just one of them.

- Jim T.



#### CHEEPSKATES

Waiting For Unta, lp/CD  
Music Maniac German import

It's ironic that New York's homegrown 60's revival bands - once the toast of hip hangouts like The Dive and the Peppermint Lounge - have found a far more appreciative audience in Europe than they have at home. While New Rose in France and Music Maniac in Germany continue to release lp's from the likes of the Fuzztones, Headless Horsemen and Cheepskates, those bands still struggle to get a decent weekend gig in their hometowns. This new Cheepskates product - their manager slipped me the CD version one night during the New Music Seminar (thanks, Ralph) - features 18 tracks, recorded live in Berlin last year. Shane Faubert's silky vocals and engaging songwriting - less 60's garage-rock than Chiltonesque these days - still tickle my eardrums, although the length of the CD does point up the 'skates one glaring weakness, the lack of a killer lead guitar. Without any huge crunchy riffs to hang onto, you wind up with an overdose of pleasantness. Still, you'd think somebody would be smart enough to release the Cheepskates records in this country!

- Jim Testa

#### TOASTERS

Thrill Me Up, lp  
Skaloid, 330 Hudson St., NYC 10013

So what if this lp was only 12-14 months late, and so what if they attract way more than should be allowed in CBGB everytime they play? This is one of my favorite ska (or any other genre, for that matter) records, period. By far their best effort to date, incredible musicianship (esp from bass and sax) and tightness. From cut to cut, each song contains hot rhythms that had (and still have) me dancing in my room. Something here for ska fans or any music fan! Bucket isn't the main singer on this lp, either; the "Unity Two" have taken over. Since this lp was released, the "Unity Two" have been replaced. It's too bad, because they've lost a lot in their live show. "Thrill Me Up" is in and will be in heavy rotation on my turntable for a long time.

- Tom A.

#### MENTAL DECAY

"Gang Bang"/"End of the Road" 7"  
Headache, 47 Myrtle Ave., Midland Park NJ 07432

Mental Decay are back after a long hiatus, this time with ex-AOD bassist Jack Steeples playing guitar. "Gang Bang," thankfully, isn't about rape but about a gang rumble, with monster powerchords and a cheery, beery punk-rock crunch that'll put you in mind of classic Dictators shit. The flipside has a more Zep-damaged blooey feel to it. Loud, raunchy and fun as ever.

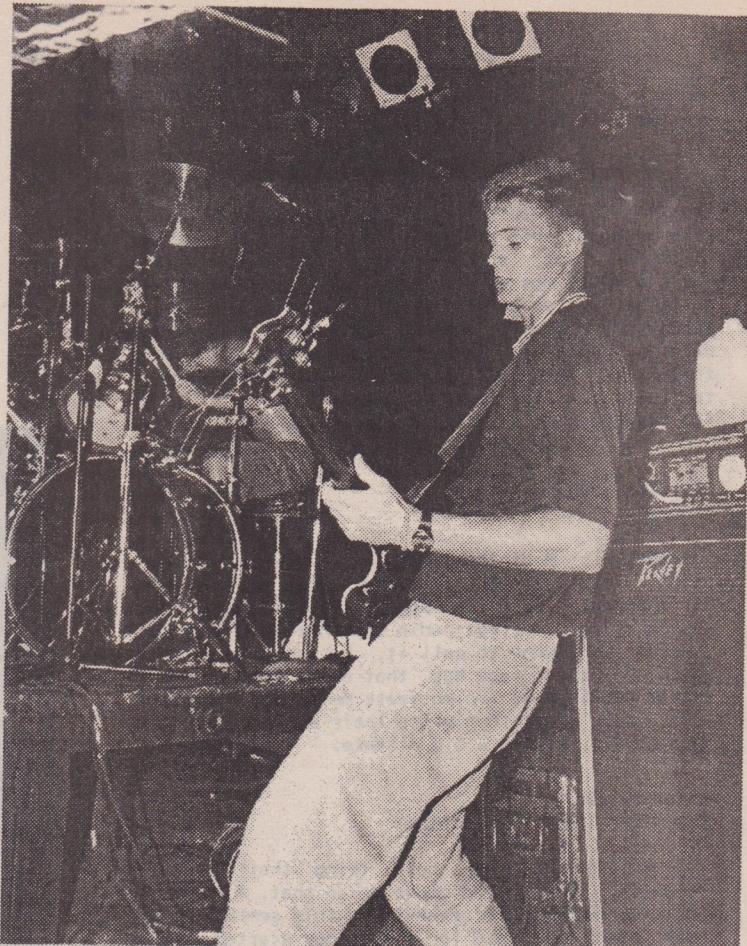
- Jim T.

#### B.A.D.L.

Trouble Doll, lp  
Shimmydisc

Bogus guitar wanking poop that tries way too hard to be funny.

- Ben Weasel



SHADES APART

Photo by Ken Salerno

#### LIFE IN A BLENDER

Welcome To the Jelly Days, lp  
Fake Doom, Lockbox 7295, NYC 10116

The only time I ever say LIAB play, they were on a bill with my band and, frankly, I didn't get it. Now, three years later, my band is a footnote to a footnote in rock history and the Blenders have a new lp...but I still don't get it. Vaguely funny, sort of melodic, kind of a like a wimpy Dead Milkmen. Production by Chris Butler, who also produced the dB's so you know what a shot in the arm for their career this is gonna be.

- Jim T.

#### SHADES APART

Shades Apart, lp  
Wishingwell

It's hard to believe they're from NJ - one listen and you'll yell out "California!" Why? Because this is heavily in the vein of Descendents/All/Big Drill Car/Bad Religion. Nothing like a ripoff or anything, don't get me wrong. They have that power/hardcore/pop edge like Descendents/All with vocals that sometimes sound EXACTLY like Big Drill Car or Bad Religion. Even some songs, like "On The Outside," ring of Bad Religion. Razor tight, melodic as fuck songs that rage from beginning to end. Crisp guitar with a ripe rhythm section. Most lyrics have a positive tone to them that comes off as honest, without oversimplifying the subject. This can and should be a successful lp for this band, and I hope to see a lot more of them.

- Tom A.

GO

"The Word Is GO"

Mike Bullshit of Bullshit Monthly's new band has an easy name to remember: Go. As in, "Go see them." "Go get this tape." "Go jump in the lake." Like most Bullshit projects, there's a keen sense of humor afoot, so nothing ever gets too serious, but the music moshes as hard, fast, and tight as anything you've heard pounding out of CBGB's on a Sunday afternoon in recent years. For a trio, they make a great big noise, and I can't wait to see them live. Assuming Mike doesn't ditch this band too so he can bicycle to Oregon again.

Noo Yawk Records, 175 5th Ave, NYC 10010.

- Jim T.

MEDICINE SUNDAY  
"Angry"

Brooklyn's Medicine Sunday has a swirly guitar sound - lots of effects, lots of dense chords, lots of changes. It's an aggressive and energetic approach to "college-radio alternative rock" or whatever you want to call it, but not one of the songs on this tape has that extra added oomph that'd set it apart or motivate me to see them play live. And they didn't write their address on the tape sleeve, always a big mistake.

LETCH PATROL  
"And Then There Was Nothing"

Brilliant. The best thing they've ever released, and you can quote me on that. A concise, incisive summation of everything this seminal punk-rock combo has stood for since they started, this demo was far & away the best trinket I picked up at NMS this year. Bravo!

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION  
"The Demo That Heck Couldn't Stop"

You gotta love their attitude - record deal in the dumpster, tour turned to shit, they put out this tape and hit the road anyway, hoping for a better tomorrow. Rock 'n roll. Good solid punk rock, these guys have been around the block a few times and know their stuff, solid lyrics on themes like Agent Orange, "Church And State." Loud and fast enuf to be mistaken for hardcore but the moshpit kids would probably find AA way too slow and thoughtful. Best Ironic Song Title of the Issue: "Destined For Obscurity."

% Jim McNaughton, 2 Lenape Ln, New Paltz, NY 12561

BIANCA "FLYSTRIP" MILLER

Bianca Miller used to be in Pianosaurus, the band that played toy instruments. She has a real band now but retains the childlike simplicity of Pianosaurus' jingly melodies in her cabaret act. This tape captures 7 of her clever novelty tunes (Tin Pan Alley types used to call this "specialty material"), in which she laments the loss of childhood treasures like Red M&M's, bemoans the fact that every single man in NYC is "Gay, Married, Or Sick," and tells us "I Fell In Love With My Gynecologist." When I was a kid, Kaye Ballard sang this sort of stuff on the Mike Douglas Show. Now Bianca does it at the Lismar Lounge. Can Pat Sajak be far away?

280 Riverside Dr, NYC 10025

- Jim T.

# DEMOS

## EARTH PIG

Not even playing a handful of shows (with the new lineup) you'd think they've been playing a long time together by the quality of this tape. Earth Pig now have 2 new guitarists (both ugly as sin), unlike the lineup on their 12" ep. Hardboiled, rocking music that's tight, original, and not too gruff. Top notch production gives every instrument a bright, full of life feel that will have you listening in no time. "Sweet Chocolate Brown" and "King Of Prussia" are the best tunes here. 5 songs, 1 Grand Funk cover, and not a loser among them. Get this before they become a mammoth success!

PO Box 348, Hawthorne, NJ 07507

- Tom Angelli



NUDE SWIRL

This New Brunswick quartet's 4-song demo rocked my sox off. Yes, it's another young guitar band proving once again that rock 'n' roll isn't gonna die as long as there are teenagers and garages for them to practice in. Tight, frantic punk rock, Buzzcocks/ MC5/Stooges territory, yeah, ok, that'll give you an idea of the beat and the crunch. But they do this spooky feedback thing with the 2nd guitar that's terrific, and not one of these four songs sound like they're imitating anybody from the 70's, hallelujah. Great lyrics, too: "Fast food and make believe/hairspray and rotten teeth/she knows exactly what she wants." I'll bet she does. Supposedly an album's coming this fall. I'll be waiting.

% Shane, 5 Hope Dr., Sayreville, NJ 08872

- Jim Testa

JULIA DREAM  
"Killin' Jive"

Psychedelia meets hardcore, or something like that. This NJ 3-piece traces their roots back to the band Negative Youth and were up til recently called Sadistic Sex (the name under which this demo was released). Songs of freedom, love, and the lack thereof, and some serious mind-shuffling, abound here. The remake of a 1939 song, "Killin' Jive," is pretty cool too. Julia Dream doesn't pigeonhole themselves and thus are definitely worth a listen. Sploob, PO Box 282, Manville NJ 08835

- Tom Brebric

THE BLISTERS

"Oozing Into Deutschland" EP  
Plutonium AG German import

I've liked the Blisters for a long time so it's been really heartening the last year or so, watching them almost magically change from a funny but basically copycat garage band into a no-shit, rock your balls off, screw everything else and run out and see 'em punk-rock phenomenon. Even when they're drunk and sloppy (like, always...) they rule - Steve "You'll Always Be Nitti To Me" Bahr's manic Milo Meets The Real Kids vocals, Dennis' non-stop fuzzblaster guitar, Bil's end-of-the-world drumming... I love these guys. So here's four songs from Germany, no less, one of which ("Fast Food") already came out in America. Nitti says the rest are leftovers 'cos they kept all the good stuff for their forthcoming U.S.A. lp, which is almost scary since these songs are so much fun. Keep it up and they'll be a controlled substance.

- Jim T.

SCREECHING WEASEL

"Punkhouse EP"

Limited Potential Records

They only made 1000 of these and I think they're all gone already, so tough shit. Although most of these tunes will probably end up re-recorded on the next Weasel lp, which is a good idea, since the production here (by Mike "I Paid For It, I Produce It") Potential tends to be a tad muddy. Still, this is the usual Weasel madcap punkrock fun, esp. the title track, about all those cheap apartments across the country where touring bands get to crash for free: "Spaghetti stains on the walls/and creepy insects in the halls/we'll have a ball/Young and poor and having fun/and we're never growing up/at the Punkhouse."

- Jim T.



SCREECHING WEASEL

Photo by Jim Testa

DAS DAMEN

"Sad Mile"/"Making Time" 45

Sub-Pop

Now it can be told: Das Damen only pretend to like 70's grunge/rock. Their real influence is, and always has been, the 60's Mod Scene. Man, you shoulda been there back in '86 at the height of the NY Mod Revival when Lyle and those dudes would put on their paisley shirts and worship at the feet of Mick London and The Mod Fun. So now here's the Damen, Dukes Of Cool and with a meaty Minneapolis record deal sticking out of their hip pocket, doing the Ultra Trendy Sub-Pop Single O' The Month scam, and what song do they pick? Something by The Creation, the godhead Mod band - and the selfsame song that gave its name to Michael J. London's fab 60's modzine lo those many years ago. Talk about turning back the clock. And now that they have their old bassist back, when are they just gonna start calling the group The Misguided again, huh?

- Jim T.

SICK OF IT ALL

Blood, Sweat & Tears, lp

In-Effect

NYHC macho lp title aside, this is a good hardcore album. While I thought their 7" was generic and lame, this is a big step up. Not that they break any new ground as far as music is concerned, but at least this is blisteringly aggressive music, delivered by a very angry singer. Sick Of It All possess what it takes to become a force in the hardcore scene. It's been done before (and a lot) but they do it just as well. This has some between-tracks dialogue that was a change of pace and a rap by KRS-1.

- Tom A.

FUGAZI

"Margin Walker," 12" EP

Dischord

Mix together an incredible bass player, a powerful rhythmic drummer, a guitarist who never learned about solid technique, and a singer who's like liquid fire, and that's something like what Fugazi is. This, their second 12", is too incredible - uncompromising power funneled thru noisy structure with lyrics that bite like a pit bull. "If you have to carry a gun/to keep your fragile seat at number one/this is a bullet you can't outrun/your way of thinking" - from the song "And The Same," about hate/violence. For those that need more than these 6 songs, Sub Pop is doing a single in November.

- Tom Angelli

RAGING SLAB

Raging Slab, lp

RCA

You can't say Raging Slab has sold out on their big label debut; the music here is the same old punk-rock 70's Southern Boogie shit they've been playing for the last 5 years or so, produced maybe just a tad bit cleaner than I'm used to hearing it but still the same ole Slab. Why they're dressed like cowboys on the jacket, I don't know. I have heard that RCA's marketing department can't figure out what the fuck to do with these guys, but I really don't think C&W is gonna be the answer. Thumbs up to the grungy "Don't Dog Me," the Neil Youngish "Geronimo" (Strempha may steal riffs like a mofa but he does have good taste), and the anthemic (if your name's Elroy Bob Sims and you drive a pickup, that is) "Get Off My Jollies." A very cool record even if it is on a major label and the lead singer still owes me 80 bucks from Wuelfing's wedding.

- Jim T.

**SKUNK**

Last American Virgin, lp  
Twin Tone

In case you haven't heard, NJ's Mighty Joe Young have changed their name to Skunk, and hopefully they're not making a statement about their personal hygiene. The long-awaited lp was produced by Andrew Weiss (of Rollins Band fame). I believe the recordings of 2 Skunk "hits" ("There'll Be Other Girls, Hoss" and "Chump") are different than those that appeared on their MJY 7" debut. Better as well. Basslines on this record keep Mike Watt in check and drums go over the top. I like to call this band the Rush of punk rock, 'cos they're so goddamn complex. Great vocal blendings on all tunes, but esp. on "Come Alive," which borders on the melodramatic but doesn't have the drive to make it cheezy or pretentious. They also cover Iron Maiden's "Wraithchild" better than any high school metal band could even dream. They've come a long way and encountered some problems (just like everyone else) but this lp should give them a big boost. Congratulations, guys. Don't let it go to your head.

- John Lisa

**CIRCUS OF POWER**  
Still Alive, lp  
Metal Blade

These guys from NYC seem to have polished up their sound somewhat since I'd seen them open up for the Dead Boys two years ago. This 6-songer was recorded somewhere in Detroit, and while we do get b&w photos galore of the band's many tattoos, alas there's no lyric sheet, although the vocals come across just fine anyway. While it leans a bit toward more commercial-type metal, it's not that bad (kind of like Guns 'N Roses? Probably). If you can ignore the "Rated R For Raunchy" sticker on the album jacket, the tracks are actually pretty good.

- Tom B.

**RATS OF UNUSUAL SIZE**

Ratzilla lp  
Vital Music

This starts out with a blast of primal punk and keeps a nice lively beat throughout, although it may lost some power and wind up grungy like Pussy Galore or Killdozer somewhere along the line. It would have been totally killer if they had been more serious about the lyrics; these have a sort of Tesco Vee mentality. Overall, not bad, printed on red vinyl if you care about that sort of thing.

- John Lisa

**BRAINDROPS**

Adreanline Mother, lp  
Vital

This is a Nina Hagen-ish freak rocker with lyrics to offend everyone. Four songs with a Descendents drop-in. Fuzzy & funky with Lily Braindrop rambling on about nothing & everything. Enough already.

- John L.

**24-7 SPYZ**

Harder Than You, lp  
In-Effect/Relativity

Bronx-based 24-7 Spyz combine an array of styles (ska, reggae, hardcore, jazz) on this debut, all sort of barely kept in continuity by a funky guitar sound. A 4-piece outfit since '86, the original members are still together (except for guitarist Kendu, who was shot but has since recovered). Diversity seems to be the order of the day here, and all the cuts can hold their own, but I can't help but wonder if this album would've had more impact if the band didn't change styles so much. Nevertheless, 24-7 Spyz have managed to open for such musically diverse acts as Murphy's Law and Living Colour, and with Rob Musso's (Iggy Pop, PiL) engineering and production assistance, they'll have a good shot at it...though a little specialization might help them.

- Tom

**DISCOUNT ANTI-CHRIST**

"Can't Afford The Lord" demo

Short, hysterical blasts of thrash-metal w/o leads is fairly produced and funny as fuck, weird artsy feedback/reverb gives it a decent original alternative sound. 6 songs for \$2.50 ppd and they'll throw in some goodies too. Write Nick, PO Box 060623, Staten Island, NY 10306. Same guy also writes a sleaze-film fanzine called "Stink," so drop him a line.

- John Lisa

**MALLORY SQUARE**

Demo

An interesting tape with a good deal of varied styles, but these guys pull the mix off nicely. "Tighter My Grip" is heavy on the vocals, with a 60's feel. "Running Still" is a bit reminiscent of the Madness sound from the early 80's, and there's even a Jim Morrison cover thrown in here too. The band seems to have a lot of fun with their music and captures it well on tape. Music with a sense of humor. DWB Productions, PO Box 702, Ringwood, NJ 07456

**SLUGFEST**

demo

One of the best demos I've heard in a while. Jangly guitar sound with a 60's punky NY sound to it. This has a nice sleazy, gruff vocal quality by Jon Ment. Very contemporary, with songs like "Syringe Surf" and shots at teen lushdom like "Drew Barrymore Blues." A bunch of punks with attitudes and a sense of humor. Get it, you'll like it. PO Box 1002700, Brooklyn, NY 11210

- Tom B.

#### BIG NURSE

In a sea filled with musical mediocrity, every once in a while something that truly stands out comes along. Big Nurse is just one of the best demos I've heard in quite some time. Three guys from the Jersey shore who manage to punch out some powerful rockin' tunes. The music is raw with abounding energy and laced with gut-level emotional lyrics. Songs build up to screaming vocals with a steady guitar sound. The band tells me they're trying to put together a 12" soon and I know it'll be on my Must Have list.

Big Nurse, Box 1555, Asbury Pk, NJ 07712

#### SIGHT AND SOUND

A melodic pseudo-psychadelic instrumental kicks off this demo nicely. Band members Adam Levine and Dave Spiegel lay down some nice guitar work on "Dave And Adam," their duo effort. Classical guitar influences give the songs a pleasant, tranquil quality without making them sound like easy-listening dredge. A good start from these newcomers. Chris Florio, 618 Tilden Ave., Teaneck NJ 07666

#### DESOLATION

"In Isolation" cassette

At first, I thought I'd be hearing something more punk because of the name, but according to this three-piece, "the band's name refers to the fact that we're separate and alone from the music and philosophy of other bands." I'm not sure they reach that lofty goal but there is something to be said about an honest effort being made towards originality here. Instrumentation that leads toward emotional imagery via borrowed and varied influences makes for an unusual sound. Demos are \$4 from Desolation, 5 2nd St., Wanaque, NJ 07465.

Above reviews by Tom "Dado" Brebric



#### THE WYGALS

Honeyhocks In The Whithersoever, lp  
Rough Trade

With two individuals and one ex-dB, the Wygals represent the most graceful extension of the Hoboken Pop phenomenon into the 90's. Much of their debut lp hearkens back to the days when New York Rocker writers waxed poetic about the "quirky pop" and "bubbly melodies" coming out of the Mile Square City. Still, most of the songs on Honeyhocks... wouldn't sound out of place on a Stevie Nicks album - not that Janet Wygal is ready to wear crinoline and lace and twirl on cue for MTV, but there's a silky commercial sheen to these songs that's a far cry from the No Wave bleat of the Individuals. "Paradise," the last song on the lp, sounds the most like the Individuals of yore, with its frenetic rhythms and sophisticated lyrics, while "Eat A Horse" best represents the Wygal sound of today. Guitarist Gene Holder manages to open up a number of these songs with riffs that would do justice to his two more glorified bandmates, Messrs. Stamey and Holsapple, and drummer Doug Wygal hasn't lost his knack for that clever counter-melody beat that's at the heart of the "quirky" Hoboken sound.

- Jim T.

#### NULLSET

"Hydrogen Jukebox," 3" CD  
Parabola, 331 Sequoia Ct., Howell NJ 07731

On "One Dead Soldier," Mitch Easter meets New Order - thumpy dance-beat melodic pop. Nothing else on this 5-song CD comes across as well but Nullset (Dave and Joe Machos) still show a lot of promise; just releasing this thing on a 3" CD shows initiative, and getting this much "pop" out of guitar, vocals, and synthesizers isn't easy. The few times I've seen them live have been technonightmares but I'll be listening for more.

- Jim T.

#### PISSED HAPPY CHILDREN

Pissed Playground, lp  
"Vigilante" 7" single  
New Beginning Records

PHC are finally starting to get some recognition for all the nasty noise they've been making. They've been grinding out twisted hate ballads for some time now, along the lines of very early Die Kreuzen, the Melvins, and the more painful Black Flag material. A lot of PHC's recordings do have a sick singalong quality, as if they're actually enjoying all this torment, but make no mistake, we're not dealing with Happy Flowers or Old Skull improv; PHC have some complex rhythms and riffage-gruff, angry, abrasive, powerful and entertaining in its own way.

- John L.

#### BUFFALO TOM

Buffalo Tom, LP  
SST

Buying an SST record these days can be quite an adventure: Are they still trying to blast our concept or just unload a bunch of bad records that their friends want to put out? Good question. In Buffalo Tom's case, it's probably a little bit of each. Their debut lp will probably be cheered by those who thought Bug wasn't such a great followup to Dinosaur Jr.'s "You're Living..." lp. There's major Dino influence here, only with a cleaner sound (which, ironically, was produced by J. Mascis). Very soothing melodies boom out over some heavy Marshall noise done with minimal effects. Vocalist Bill Janovitz does a fine job belting out "The Bus" and "Sunflower Suit" while most of the rest follow a mild Mascis influence once again. And since Dinosaur Jr. is just about the only SST band worth listening to anymore, this should be real big, real soon.

- John L.



WHIPLASH

Photo by Michele (Little Mo)

**WHIPLASH**

Insult To Injury, lp

Roadracer

Whiplash has two enemies - Metallica and King Diamond. Both do what Whiplash does, and a whole lot better. Guitarist Tony D'Ortaro writes and plays like a fifth horsemen, most successfully on "Pistol Whipped" and "Voice Of Sanity." But when Glenn Hansen pulls out his falsetto on "Hiroshima" or "Essence Of Evil," it has all the bite of a Memorex commercial. A thrashing facsimile, nonetheless.

- Michele T.

**LOUDON WAINWRIGHT III**

Therapy, lp

Silvertone/RCA

I've been a Loudon Wainwright fan longer than some of my readers have been alive, seems like..."Dead Skunk" came out in, what...1974? Anyway, 1989 and Therapy finds this loveably eccentric romantic folkie in fine form and on a spiffy new custom label, where I hope he'll prosper for a long time. The production here is better than on most of his recent low-budget lps, with crips band accompaniments, and the songs reflect the same wry wit, as Loudon pokes a little fun at MTV (wondering why kids love watching bands lip sync so much) and his own role as a house husband ("Me And All The Other Mothers.") Inspirational verse: "This song don't have a video/you'll have to pay attention/to how the melody might go/and the lyrics I might mention/I know you need distraction/or else you tend to fidget/when there's no cleavage footage/and not one single midget."

- Jim T.

**THE FLUID**

Roadmouth, lp

Sub-Pop, 1932 1st Ave. #1103, Seattle WA 98101

Dave Run It recently harangued me with the observation that all the bands I really love lately sound like old shit I've loved for ten years. Well, yeah, ok...so what? The Fluid recycle late 60's, early 70's garage-rock punk, and I'd be the last to call this original - but it blasts off my turntable nightly and makes me smile, which is about all I expect from rock 'n roll these days anyway. And what's Dave Run It done for punk rock lately besides get married and have a baby, anyway????

- Jim T.

**SENATOR FLUX**

Spectacles, Testicles, Wallet & Watch, lp

Resonance (Netherlands import)

Senator Flux are a D.C. band (project?) whose first record is on a foreign label, featuring Jeff Nelson (ex Minor Threat) and Jeff Turner (Gray Matter, Wonderama). This has a 60's rock feel to it, with harmonies and melodies on the light side (as far as emotion, power, etc go). Actually, this is a really good album that doesn't fit any category. Seems like the lyrics were already-written poems that don't fit the timing of the music, which doesn't always seem to work...but a review can't really do this justice. Listen for yourself, you'll be surprised.

- Tom A.

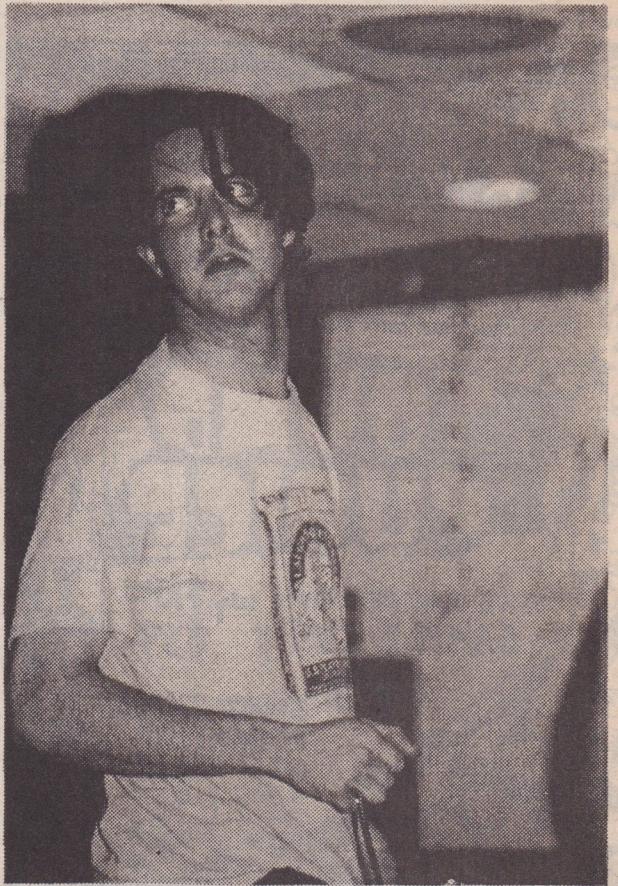
**KNIFEDANCE**

Wolf Hour, lp

Hit & Run, Box 44302, Cleveland OH 44114

Raging full-blast hard rock, not quite metal and certainly not hardcore although with aspects (speed, power, heavy riffing) of both. The kind of band that's never gonna make it because you can't hang any sort of label on them, other than "killer." Check it out.

- Jim Testa



**TOM DARK/KNIFEDANCE**

Photo by Jim Testa

**FUNZINE #1**

% Chris Cellene, 2 Knox Terrace, Totowa NJ 07512 \$1.00

Debut issue features All, Henry Rollins, The Undead and Hamsters On Crack intvw, plus joke pages, graphics, photos, and some unexpected meat, like the editorial by the kid who explains he went straight edge after both his parents contracted cancer from cigarettes.

**IN MEMORY OF... #3**

% David Koenig, 200 E. Price St. #1B Linden, NJ 07036 50 cents

StraightEdge zine that tries to be a little more open-minded than most, altho the editor has this stupid prejudice against hardcore record labels like Hawker and In-Effect, which he accuses of despoiling and ripping 'off "the scene." Interviews with Krakdown and Insted.

**POSITIVE YOUTH/BRIGHTER FUTURE #1**

PO Box 1100, Ocean City NJ 08226 \$1

This isn't as didactic as the name implies - #1 has interviews with skinheads Warzone and punkers The Fiendz, so it's not just all SE/posi-bands, or all music for that matter. Poetry, opinions, lively and thought-provoking. A good beginning.

**CLAWHAMMER #2**

% Krouse, RD 2 Box 168, New Castle PA 16101 \$1 + 1 stamp

An "art zine" full of punk-rock drawings and cartoons, mixed up with some reviews (they have an elaborate rating system that's explained in detail but works a little like Star Search - so many points for originality, so many for appearance, etc...) Kind of messy & skimpy for a dollar but stick with it.

**IGNORANCE IS NO EXCUSE #2**

% Dan Werle, 3610 Deephaven Dr., Colo Springs, CO 80920 \$1 ppd

1/2 size punkzine crammed with interviews and reviews. This ish has Underdog, The Creeps, and All.

# ZINES

**RABID #4**

% Alex, 104 James St., Morristown, NJ 07960 (free w/ 2 stamps)

This looks like somebody xeroxed Conflict right down to the way the interviews are all mixed in with the record reviews. The writing is bright, enthusiastic, and just callow enough to convince me this staff goes to college somewhere in the area. Like when editor Alex (who's a girl, by the way) matter of factly states that Minor Threat was the worst hardcore band of all time. Such ignorance aside, most of this is more readable than most 'zines and it's free if you find it laying around (or write Alex a nice letter and ask for one.)

**THIS #3**

PO Box 1005, DeKalb IL 60115 \$2

Neat new offset look on heavy stock, and that "I Got A Macintosh PC" typesetting you can't mistake for anything else. Interviews lean heavily toward the Gerardmetal genre (My Dad Is Dead, Killdozer, VolSuns, Didjits); that is, noisy and just offcenter enough to stay interesting.

**THIS ZINE SUCKS #16**

Box 7952, W. Trenton NJ 08628 \$1

Lots of heavy metal this issue with Dark Angel, Death, and Exodus among the interviews, those peripatetic Fiendz (god, they're getting interviewed a lot lately for a band that doesn't tour!), and Stumbling Way, plus the usual reviews and shit.

**BACK 4 MORE #1**

% Jay, 18 Malaga Dr., Trenton NJ 08853 \$1

This used to be called Density but the new name and new look are a great improvement. This has really matured (as has the editor, since he now goes by Jay instead of Jason, I guess). Some Sk8 stuff, lotsa photos, reviews, and intvw with Rollins, Open Yr Eyes, Warzone, Turning Point, Sick Of It All, Insight, and Breakdown (whew!).

**WRONG CONCLUSION #3**

151 1st Ave Box A, NY NY 10003 \$1

I love this sort of messy anarchic pastepunk layout - reminds me of good ol' Sick Teen, the godliest fanzine there ever was. Interviews here are ok too, with Prong, Agnostic Front, Alice Donut, and Afterbirth. This may be the only zine to ask if Roger Miret got poked up the ass in prison, which may or may not be in good taste but is certainly punk rock.

**CHAIRS MISSING #5**

PO Box 375, Fairfield CT 06430 \$2

This starts off with editor Scott Munroe threatening to call his libel lawyers if he gets slagged anymore (Johnny Puke called him "an asshole" in Wrong Conclusion). Then there are interviews with a lot of scummy bands I don't care about - Lisa Suckdog, Go Betweens, Honeymoon Killers - and a few I do, like Fugazi. Plus yet another Henry Rollins interview. Plus record and fanzine reviews. (If I could sue everyone who called me an asshole, I'd own my own condo and publishing empire by now, Scottso...)

**CONFLICT #50**

PO Box 264, NYC 10009 \$2

Speaking of calling people asshole, Gerard hits the half-century mark with Royal Trux as the interview, Steve Blush and Peter Wright as this issue's whipping boys, and just like all the other issues, you'll read this cover to cover just to make sure you're not mentioned anywhere.

**POSITIVE INFLUENCE #5**

1031 Santa Cruz, San Pedro, CA 90731 \$1

Pretty much what you'd expect from the name, with Uniform Choice, UpFront, Forthright, and Turn It Around, altho editors Buster and Anji promise to broaden the scope of the zine in future issues. Lots of heart and a good attitude, and hopefully they'll start asking bands about more issues than Straight Edginess and Positivity soon.

**M.A.S. #9**

Box 8722, Minn. MN 55408 \$2

Final issue of what used to be called Minneapolis Alternative Scene. Basic MRR punk rock layout with interviews, features, some political pieces, and lots of reviews. They're changing the name to (and focus) to Profane Existence.

**NO ANSWERS #7**

% Kent, Box 680, Caleta CA 93116 \$2

Nice looking positive/hc zine with good graphics, photos, and interviews w/ Fugazi, Uniform Choice, Inside Out, but the big deal is the piece on Slapshot, in which the editor really nails Choke for his bigoted beliefs. Good job!

**GROWING #6**

4946 West Pt. Way, W. Valley City Utah 84120 (no price listed, \$1?)

Nice arty looking 1/2 size zine with some music and fiction, artwork.

**ORGASM ADDICT #1**

Box 1197, Marshfield MA 02050 \$1(?)

Messy looking punkzine with weird interviews, including 3 with Donny The Punk (sober, drunk, and stoned, progressively more revealing). Nice start, let's see where it goes.

**RE-IGNITION #3**

1163 E. 1st St. Tustin CA 92680

\$1.50

Yes, yet another posi/SE zine, with Verbal Assault, Slapshot, Brotherhood, Haywire, and NJ's Vision. Good layouts and they do a good job interviewing the newer unknown bands too.

**BEN IS DEAD #5**

Box 3166, Hollywood CA 90028 \$1(?)

They print 10,000 of these, same size and format as Jersey Beat's new newsprint look, and give them away free at clubs & stores around Hollywood. Send a buck if you write for one. Lots of scene news, live reviews, good interviews... almost too pro to be a fanzine, but a definite punk rock spirit. Good job. NY could use something like this.

**UNI-FORCE #6**

% Mark Sawickis, 307 Lindell Dr. #1, Normal IL 61781 \$3

More metal damage for you headbangers, tons of bands, special focus on demo reviews (90 of 'em!), show reviews and photos, plus a pullout poster of Assassin and Evil Dead.

by Tom 'Dado' Brebric

Big Nurse is a new-to-the-scene 3-piece from the Asbury Park area. After hearing their self-titled demo, I knew it'd be worth the trek down to the shore to meet the guys responsible for the great tunes on that tape. Big Nurse was picked as Best New Band by a local Asbury Pk paper, but they're pretty modest about that. I think the title is deserved. The music is powerful, original, and played at full throttle. The most apt comparison might be Husker Du. The roster is as follows:

Curtis Kile: guitars, echoplex, and most talkative spokesman

Bill Lovgren: drums, vocals

Ken Hulse: bass, lead vocals

Questions by Tom Brebric. Answers identified by bandmember unless everyone was talking at once or we couldn't figure out who said what.

Q: The standard first question - how'd you get together?

Curtis: We grew up together in Bricktown. I knew Bill and Ken for like 5 years. We were in a bunch of bands but nothing we really want to mention. Up till now we really never made a conscious effort to do anything like play out, it was like watching ourselves actually do something.

Q: Where have you played?

We played CBGB in NYC with Cryptic Slaughter and Half A Chicken and we did an interview for WRSU. We haven't played out much lately because we've been in the studio (at Subterranean Sound) putting all our efforts into cutting a 12 inch. We've been stuck for transportation and lately have had to cram the 3 of us and all the equipment into Bill's Saab. We've got show coming up at the Pipeline in Newark.

Q: When will the 12 inch be coming out?

[Indicates sometime in October] We've got some cash to do it and we're trying to work something out with a distributor. Other than that, we manage ourselves.

Q: What's the scene like down the shore?

The shore scene sucks. Except for the Brighton Bar, they don't advertise much but they still put on some great shows. Other than that, you've got The Green Parrot in Neptune doing some alternative bands. A new place opened in Asbury called the T-Birds Cafe, but it's kind of small.

[At this point, everyone kicked back for Buds and we reminisced about the Uncle Floyd Show and how Mugsy and Hugo were all our favorites. I wondered about the Budweiser guitar promo sign hanging on the wall of their rehearsal space. Corporate connection?]

Q: Is Bud your favorite beer?

No, but it fits our budget.

Q: What do you do when you're not in the band?

Drink, sleep, work sometimes.

[At this point, Big Nurse did a practice jam for us. The song "Fade To Black" from the demo won't be on the album but the new material is just as good. My first impression of them live was that these guys are loud. VERY LOUD! and that's fine with me. BN practices at a cool place called The Hot Dog House, right above The Tap Room on Main St. in Asbury Park. Area bands can rent it out by the month and someone is setting up a small recording studio there. Getting back to Big Nurse's music, many of the songs seem to be structured around lost love and not getting what you want...]

Q: Is alienation a popular theme in the band?

Ken: It's not a topic with me, but it's...a reality.

Q: What bands does Big Nurse like?

Dinosaur Jr., Husker Du, Descendents, Screaming Trees. Locally, we like Dirge and the X Men. We fuckin' hate Lynyrd Skynyrd.

For info, demos, and news about the album, write Big Nurse, Box 1555, Asbury Pk, NJ 07712

# The Big Noise of Big Nurse



# UNDERDOG

## THE VANISHING POINT

Available on LP and Cassette



CAROLINE

THE PRIMEVAL UNKNOWN  
The Primeval Unknown, lp  
Skyclad

A 60's garage throwback sound with a dash of white soul. Songs about loneliness and hopelessness that somehow manage not to depress. These guys look the garage bit but do so without ripping anyone off tune-wise. The A side has a somewhat grungier, appealing sound to it.

- Tom B.

FAITH NO MORE  
The Real Thing, lp  
Slash/Reprise

Imagine a weird version of Living Colour, but from the West Coast, and you kind of have an idea of Faith No More. They're all incredible musicians, but something just doesn't click. For one, the keyboards seem to play a much too important role in the band. That aside, they play something stuck between rock and cheezy metal, with a vocalist that seems influenced by the Bad Brains' HR. Some songs are really good (music and lyrics) while others are losers (pathetic metal/death lyrics set to that cheap metal-riffing guitar). "Woodpecker From Mars," an instrumental, is an intense stand out. I'm middle of the road on this one.

- Tom A.

GOD BULLIES  
Mamawombomb, lp  
Amphetamine Reptile/TwinTone

Was it just an accident that this came out around the same time that Manson celebrated his 20th anniversary? Play this lp full through once and you'll be feeling sorry for Charles. Play it more than twice in the space of a week and you'll want to restart his Family. Totally fucking off-the-wall. Some songs just seem like people playing what they like, a punkier Sub Pop formula, while others are evil, making me glad I can't make out the lyrics. Try this: Wear a Walkman, volume around 7-8, and play something like Nirvana. Now walk into a busy junkyard. Try to siphon all these incoming sounds into one song, while every now & then switching to an AM talk station. Like it? Then get this.

- Tom A.

FETCHIN' BONES  
Monster, lp  
Capitol

What the Patti Smith Group might have sounded like if Patti had emerged in the wake of R.E.M.'s major label success/excess instead of in the heyday of minimalist punk-rock. Aggressive, crunchy guitars and good songwriting, if a bit too major label for my tastes.

THE 27 VARIOUS  
Yes, Indeed, lp  
Susstones

Chimey Beatlesque pop filtered thru a wry, postmodern personality, or Robyn Hitchcock goes to Minneapolis.

HICKOIDS  
Waltz Across Dress Texas, lp  
Toxic Shock

Occasionally hot, frequently lame cowpunk, with way too many fag jokes for my taste.

LATE ARRIVALS

TEEN PUNKS IN HEAT Fanzine #1  
Box 37, Prospect Hts, IL 60070 \$1  
Ben Weasel's "sexzine" is surprisingly on the up'n up - an in-depth interview with a prostitute about her trade and some columns about sex. The Russ Underdog nude centerfold will be a collector's item.

HIPPYCORE Fanzine #6  
Box 195, Mesa AZ 85211 \$1.50  
Big fat issue with interviews, reviews, columns, some information about soft energy, poetry, art, humor, anarchists, the KKK...

CONTAX ONE Fanzine #4  
% Becky Perrone, 12 Harriett La. E., Darien CT 06820 \$1.50 ppd

Mix of hardcore music/interviews, political issues (animal rights this time around), comix, and the like. Good photos too.

COMPLEX Fanzine #1  
320 Montgomery St., Highland Pk NJ 08904

Sam Shifman's new 'zine, which promises to take a jaundiced view of New Brunswick's insular, talent-laden scene. Brunfuss needs a good swift kick in the butt, esp. with Cathy Wojcik leaving for England (bye, Cath, and thanks for EVERYTHING!!), and Sam's just the guy to dole it out. #1 has a funny P.E.D. tour diary and lots of reviews, in a messy, chaotic layout that keeps you guessing.

Above reviews by Jim Testa

BORIS GREBENSHIKOV  
Radio Silence, lp  
CBS

Boris Grebеншиков, a (now) well-known Russian musician, gained fame for his albums and touring without government consent (punk rock rebellion personified). Over the last year or so, he's been in the U.S. and gotten a lot of coverage on MTV and the like. This lp is just honest, stripped to the essentials rock 'n roll. Nothing cliche, no egos, just a man and his passion, music. The music has a folkie feel to it, while some songs have a more rock-edge, such as "Radio Silence" or "Young Lions." Lyrics are in English except for "Young Lions" and "China." While this whole lp isn't my cup of tea, it's very good and I have a lot of respect for Boris. Of course, methinks that CBS Records only has dollar signs in their eyes.

- Tom A.

HEAVY MENTAL  
"Heavy Mental Live" cassette  
Persistent Productions, Box 777, Evanston, IL 60204

Recorded live at 3 of the Lincoln Park Peace Festivals in Chicago ('86-'88), this tape provides a good introduction to Heavy Mental, a cheeky garage band with a good sense of humor. Like most Persistent productions, this comes with a cool comic too.

# WHITE ZOMBIE



Jersey Beat Pin-Up

Photo by Michele (Little Mo)

# TWO NEW RELEASES FROM ROADKILL

## NO EMPATHY



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